

# **#LIKE – What are Adolescents' Experiences of Using Social Media?**

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## **Abstract**

Adolescent engagement with digital communication, especially social media, has risen in recent years. Given this, and a lack of psychological exploration of the topic, the current study set out to understand the experience of adolescents using social media.

Six participants (three male and three female aged 14) shared their experiences through semi-structured interviews. They were all year 10 students in an Academy in southeast England. The resulting data was analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Eight group superordinate themes were identified. These highlighted a variety of positive and negative experiences. The themes were explored in relation to conceptual models and latent psychological factors that could be motivating mechanisms driving the use of social media. Comparisons made between these findings and existing literature demonstrated a need for more ‘bottom-up’ qualitative research to understand adolescent social media use.

The findings highlighted a number of areas relating to professional practice with adolescents using social media. There is a particular need for dialogue between these social media users and the personal and professional networks of people who support them. Implications for practice are discussed.

*Keywords: Adolescents, Educational Psychologist, Educational Psychology, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, Social Media.*

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### **List of Acronyms Used**

ADHD	-	Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder
BBC	-	British Broadcasting Company
BPS	-	British Psychological Society
CP	-	Child Protection
DECP	-	Division of Educational and Child Psychology
EP	-	Educational Psychologist
EPiT	-	Educational Psychologist in Training
HCPC	-	Health and Care Professions Council
IPA	-	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
LA	-	Local Authority
OfCOM	-	Office of Communications
SC	-	Social Connectedness
SCT	-	Socio-Cultural Theory
SDT	-	Self Determination Theory
SES	-	Socio-Economic Status
SIG	-	Social Identity Gratification
SM	-	Social Media
SMT	-	Social Media Technology
SNS	-	Social Networking Sites
TEP	-	Trainee Educational Psychologist
UEL	-	University of East London

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Chapter Overview**

In this chapter I will discuss the context of this research (1.2). I will then go on to describe what social media is (1.3). Next I will operationalise the key terms used throughout this research (1.4). After this I will explain some findings from my initial reading into the area of Social Media (SM) and adolescence (1.5). I will then discuss my thoughts and questions with regards to these findings (1.6). Finally I will summarise this chapter (1.7).

### **1.2 Context of the Research**

To understand initially why the usage of SM type websites is an important area of research, it is pertinent to recognise that as technology develops, Internet use is fast growing and increasingly easy. The Office of Communications (OfCOM), an independent regulator and competition authority for the United Kingdom based communications industries, released an audit outlining the media use and attitudes report of children and parents (OfCOM, 2013). OfCOM (2013) reported that since 2012 the number of homes in the UK with a tablet device has more than doubled; currently at 51%. Moreover, the use of such devices amongst five-15 year olds has tripled in this same time period (42%). OfCOM's (2013) report indicated that this prevalence for internet-enabled devices reflected the change of how and why children are going online. The report went on to suggest that the older children's primary reason for going online was related to peer communication. OfCOM explained that findings indicated a decrease in the total number of children with a social networking profile. They added however, that there was an increase in the total number of different social networking sites being used. OfCOM argue that this also indicates a growth in the number of children who can potentially be contacted by people unknown to them.

OfCOM (2013) outlined further findings pertaining to the use of SM by children. The research commissioned by OfCOM (2013) made a distinction between pre-teens, (children between the ages of 8-11) and early stage adolescents (children aged 12-15). There was a distinct difference in the way these two groups used their digital communication/entertainment devices. For the pre-teens, there was a focus on gaming on mobile devices. Whilst for the early stage adolescents, there was increase in the use



of smartphone style mobile devices. There was also an increase in the number of active profiles on SM type websites in this age category. Through these findings OfCOM (2013) described the frequency, the mechanical purpose (upload pictures, send messages etc) and the modality (laptop, desktop PC, mobile device etc) through which these children accessed SM type websites. The rationale for the current research revolves around question as to why these children are accessing SM websites.

I am currently a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP). This research has been completed as part of the University of East London's (UEL) requirement of the training programme. To enable me to do this, I worked in partnership with a Local Authority (LA). As part of my role as TEP within the LA, I work as a link EP with a group of schools. Commonly referred to as a patch of schools. As the link EP for the schools I often have discussions with these schools about the relevance and impact of SM in children's lives.

This is a novel piece of research into the lived experiences of adolescents who use social media. The adolescents' views are used as insight to try and develop as rich a picture of their experiences as possible.

### 1.3 *What is Social Media?*

When talking about SM, I make reference to the use of the Internet for the purposes of communication in a real-time, and identifiable online environment. I use the same definition of real-time and identifiable as Pai and Arnott (2013). Such usage of the Internet includes, but is not limited to, websites like; Facebook and Twitter. This includes access to such platforms either through the use of an app, or by directly accessing the relevant websites. Since approximately 2000, the use of SM started, with the pioneering site, Friends Reunited (Friends Reunited, 2013). Today, there are various different SM with over a billion active users on Facebook alone (Facebook, 2013).

There is an important distinction to be made between the use of a real-time and identifiable environments, and their delayed and anonymous counterparts. Pai and Arnott (2013) assessed the understanding of online communities and SM. Their findings indicated that researchers in the field had made a few key distinctions between an online community and SM websites. There appeared to be a dichotomy. Specifically Mayfield

(2005) who made two key distinctions, SM websites had a focus on connections between users, rather than online communities that connected users based on the content. The other distinction was that SM websites relied on context rather than the topic oriented nature of other online communities. Other differences came from researchers such as Rau, Gao and Ding (2008) who noted the difference in the purpose of the two types of sites. SM websites oriented towards social and emotional support amongst its users, whereas online communities are primarily used as an information or knowledge gathering/sharing conduit. Rau, Gao and Ding's (2008) most crucial explanation of the difference between online communities and SM websites was the anonymity and indirect nature of communication between the users in the online communities, the opposite of SM websites. Ellison, Steinfeld and Lampe (2007) further reiterated the fundamental differences namely, anonymity as well as the reasons users connected. While it is understood that all interactions between people online are computer/Internet mediated social spaces (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002), SM websites are the only ones that take place in a real-time environment (Hoffman and Novak, 1996). As such, this research only considers the experiences of children who engage with SM type websites. Where children partook in both, they were asked to only consider their experiences when using the SM websites.

#### 1.4 *Operationalisation of Key-Terms*

In this research I use the words/phrases child(ren), adolescent(s), young-person/people. When using these I am referring explicitly to people aged 14-15 unless stated otherwise. This age group was selected for the reasons outlined in the Methodology chapter.

Social media, in and of itself, has no actual definition (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). As such, there is debate as to what is meant by SM. Authors in the field of business and marketing, Kaplan and Haelein, (2010), conceptualised social media as “various forms of media content that are publicly available and created by end-users” (p.61). That is, content which is created by and for, distributed to and by, and publicly available to end-users. For the purpose of this research, I go further to add the limitations that SM and apps must also be real-time and identifiable. This is for the reasons outlined in section (1.3). The outstandingly most popular sites referred to by the participants of my study were Facebook and Twitter.

I feel that a combination of the aforementioned ideas and distinctions between SM and other online communicative devices describes types of websites I refer to in this study.

### 1.5 Initial Reading Around Social Media Usage

Research in this area has indicated detrimental effects of prolonged, excessive or inappropriate use of SM. These particular areas were of interest to me. This was a reconnaissance exercise designed to inform my ideas and predispositions prior to undertaking research in this area. The following sub-areas are not an exhaustive understanding of research in social media.

#### 1.5.1 Emotional Dependence

Research has identified that the use of SM type websites delivers gratification on a personal and social level (Raacke and Bonds-Raacke, 2008), which explains why college students use them. This was referring to college students in the USA. However, Clayton, Osborne, Miller and Oberle (2013) suggest that this only tells a part of the story. They argued that lonely and anxious individuals use SM as it sustains a social relationship without the traditional social context (Sheldon, 2008).

Work by Clayton et al. (2013), attempted to use loneliness and anxiousness as predictors of usage and emotional connectedness (how integrated access to SM is to a person's daily activities) to SM. In addition to this, they added alcohol and marijuana to use as predictors of emotional connectedness to these types of websites.

Clayton et al. (2013) established a relationship between anxiousness, alcohol, and marijuana use and emotional connectedness, specifically, with Facebook. These were linked to; the context of how Facebook was accessed, socially or alone. The things that were seen, these could have been pictures depicting favourable alcohol use. Or, an individuals' characteristics, loneliness/anxiousness. In addition to this, Clayton et al. (2013) proposed that loneliness and anxiousness impacted on the way individuals used Facebook, accounting for higher frequency and higher emotional connectedness. These variables allowed the researchers to predict behaviours/connectedness to Facebook

The study by Clayton et al. (2013) focussed on American college students living in dormitories. The context within this living accommodation cannot be accepted as a fair interpolation of the wider community. For a first time college student living alone, away from parents for the first time can be a difficult time. The day-to-day experiences may not be representative of adults who live alone. Further to this, scores for loneliness, anxiousness and alcohol/marijuana use was taken by self-report measures.

### 1.5.2 Addiction

Research by Kuss, Griffiths and Binder (2013) identified Internet usage behaviours and the likelihood of addiction. Kuss et al. (2013) remarked that SM websites, namely Facebook, had addictive potential. Research indicates that Internet addiction manifests with similar symptoms to that of other types of addictions, mood-modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict and relapse (Griffiths, 2005).

Kuss et al. (2013) analysed the responses of over 2000 students from an English university. The online survey mapped risk factors involved with the emerging mental health problem of Internet addiction. In addition to this, many other risk factors involved with Internet addiction; online gaming, chatting, and instant messages, are features that are often integrated within SM.

The sample used in the research by Kuss et al. (2013) is not of a homogenous group. The participants were from one university, the levels of study were approximately, 68% Bachelor's degree, 11% Master's degree and <1% were completing a Doctorate. The mean age of participants was roughly 22 years old, but the ages ranged from 18 to 64. The age-range meant that there are factors, such as family situation, left unaccounted for. In addition to this, personality traits/types were used but there was no exploration of the context of individuals. Factors such as living arrangements, financial status or addiction to substances were not taken in to account.

### 1.5.3 Influence

The notion that we can be influenced by our peers (Kelman, 1958) and are susceptible sharing the views of others in spite of our own thoughts, feelings or beliefs (Asch, 1955) is not new. But is this the case when the Internet is involved and the external

influences are not necessarily physically present? Research by Rauch and Schanz (2013) argues that there is a relationship between the use of Facebook and the acceptance of messages containing racist opinions. Participants were shown one of three racially charged messages based, an egalitarian message, a racist message with a superiority focus and a racist message with a victim focus. The findings from Rauch and Schanz (2013) suggested that the two factors influencing the level to which the participants corroborated a racist message were; the frequency, and the reason, with which they used Facebook. It was indicated that if a person used Facebook often, they were found to be more likely to agree with the messages posted. In particular, the authors specified that messages of a racist disposition would be agreed with (Rauch and Schanz, 2013). However, if the reason they connected to Facebook was to try to seek information then they were less likely to agree with racist messages and be more accepting of messages of egalitarian dispositions (Rauch and Schanz, 2013).

Data collected regarding the participants was their sex, race, age, occupation and level of education (Rauch and Schanz, 2013). Only the scores from participants who identified themselves as white were used for analysis. However, the participants' attitudes towards race were not noted prior to the study. The participants ranged between 18-66 years of age, mean 23. The age range of participants indicates a generational gap; it is likely that the participants will have a varying attitude towards race, and, as this was not accounted for, there is a possibility that the results are not a reflection of what may have occurred.

#### 1.5.4 *Impact of Use*

The British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) Newsbeat department compiled research with 1,015 British 15-18 year olds. Their findings outlined some interesting headline findings. It was found that as much as 25% of the people they surveyed were happier online than in real-life (BBC, 2014). Additional findings were 10% of the research population reporting their online friends knew them better. As much as 43% reported found it easier to talk to people online compared to in person. Perhaps the more potent findings from the BBC (2014) research was the 33% of the research population who reported sometimes feeling lonely, depressed, jealous, and/or stressed online. It is not clear if the same 33% are encompassed in all 4 of those emotions.

## 1.6 Conclusions from Initial Reading

There are various questions that arise from the research in the previous section. The work of Clayton et al. (2013) seems to leave uncertainty about the level of application in non-American cultures. The findings from Kuss et al. (2013) suggest that children in schools today are susceptible to these risk factors. They go further to recommend that children should be made aware of specific risk factors. However, I am not sure that the findings carry the same implications for this age demographic. Research has yet to indicate if these risk factors are applicable to 14-15 year old children as the reason their explicit experiences are not yet known; The aim of this research.

The implications for adolescents from the work of Rauch and Schanz (2013), if applicable, suggest that frequent use of SM other than for information seeking, could impact on the beliefs and attitudes developed and sustained by the children. Two important questions are raised from the findings of BBC (2014). The first, are there implications of these findings? The answer is not within the scope of my research, but describes an undertone of adolescent SM use that could potentially be unhealthy or have detrimental consequences in other areas of the adolescents' lives. The second question, why did the BBC (2014) imply that the online lives of their participants was not real life? The findings seem to suggest that their participants' online were intertwined with their non-online lives. If the implication from the findings of the BBC (2014) are that there is some invisible boundary keeping the real lives and the online lives of their research population apart, then it is important that this is researched.

It is not necessary that the questions asked were areas of interest to the respective researchers when completing their research. The findings and ideas offered an opportunity to uncover where research in this area may go. I aim to understand what adolescents experience when they use social media from their point of view.

## 1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the context of the current research (1.2). I then described what SM is (1.3) and operationalised the key-terms for this research (1.4). After this, I engaged with some of the findings from my initial reading (1.5) and my conclusions from this (1.6). I concluded with this summary (1.7).

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Overview**

In this chapter I will outline the search strategy (2.2) that I used to develop and refine my systematic literature search. I will explicitly state the inclusion criteria (2.2.1) that I used. Next, I will explain the order that I review each article (2.2.2) that I found to be relevant to this research area. I will then give an overview of the literature currently available (2.3), as at the date of searching. After this, I will explore and summarise the articles that I found as a result of my systematic literature review (2.4). This chapter will conclude with the research question (2.5) and a chapter summary (2.6).

### **2.2 Search Strategies**

My first attempt at completing the systematic literature review was not successful due to a keyword search that was too broad. This is detailed in appendix A.

I carefully reconsidered the different search terms I initially used. I decided that by using a single search query: 'Social Media' I would be including all of the items that would be relevant to my area of research. I will refer to this refined search as Social Media 2 (SM2). I then refined the adolescent search in a similar way. The list evolved to: 'Adolescen\*'. I will refer to this as Adolescent 2 (A2). In EBSCOHost the keyword from SM2 returned 4,199 (Social Media) (see Appendix B; arrow 1). The keyword from A2 returned 222,272 (Adolescen\*) (see Appendix B; arrow 2) items. The combined search from SM2 and A2, using an 'AND' command, returned 332 items. I applied the filters; year (2009-2014) (197), peer-reviewed (144), and adolescent (13-17 years old) (89) (this figure, 89, will be referred to as, Search 1 (S1) (see Appendix B; arrow 3).

I considered the relevance of the 89 articles in relation to my research area; this left 39 items to review in more depth by accessing the abstracts of these 39 articles. I repeated this procedure using SM2 and A2 for the following databases; EBSCOHost – Academic Search Complete, and Science Direct. I applied SM2 to Academic Search Complete this returned 19,168 (see Appendix C; arrow 1) items and search A2 returned 187,448 (see Appendix C; arrow 2) items. An 'AND' command between SM2 and A2 in Academic Search Complete returned 346 items. Not all of the filters above were available within this database. I was able to apply 'year (2009-2014) (274)' and 'peer-reviewed (225)'. I

then manually searched through these items to apply the adolescent (13-17 years old) filter. From the 225 items, I had to review 50 for this purpose (this figure, 50, will be referred to as Search 2 (S2) see Appendix C; arrow 3). I applied the SM2 and A2 search criteria to the ScienceDirect database in a single 'AND' command. This database returned 37 items. Once again, I manually searched through these items to apply the adolescent (13-17 years old) filter. From the 37 items, I had to review 20 for this purpose (This figure, 20, will be referred to as Search 3 (S3) see Appendix C; arrow 4).

I briefly reviewed the papers as I was entering them in to the matrix (see Appendix D). The figures S1, S2, and S3 totalled 109. Of these papers, 13 were repeated and I felt a further 24 were not relevant to my area of research because of the specific areas of focus. This left 72 articles (see Appendix D) for me to read abstracts to determine whether they were relevant and had implications to my area of research.

Having read the abstracts of those 72 items, I determined that I needed to read 11 in more detail (see Appendix E). I attempted to access all 11 articles; due to various restrictions I was only able to obtain full access to nine of them (see Appendix E). At this stage I also applied another inclusion criteria, where the population of participants must have been from a country where English was the first language. Of these nine, one was deemed unsuitable for the reasons outlined in (see Appendix E) in the 'reason' column. In section 2.3 I highlight these findings and indicate any further sources of reading that were identified from the list generated through my search. The same inclusion and exclusion criteria apply. In total, three additional papers were identified for further reading (see Appendix F). In total, nine papers were included in the final literature review (see Appendix E&F).

### 2.2.1 Inclusion & Exclusion Criteria

In short, to be considered for this literature review, the papers needed to be 'peer-reviewed'. This was to ensure that the papers had academic rigour. They had to be 'published between 2009 and 2014', inclusive. This was to ensure that they were recent and up-to-date in a fast evolving area. They had to be in relation to 'adolescent (13-17 year old)' participants. This is because my study is related to this age group. They also needed to be participant populations where 'English is the first language (English is the official language of the general population in the country)'. This is to try to exclude



factors such as translations and phonetic spelling of other languages creating issues in understanding SM/SNS content.

### 2.2.2 Order of Exploration

I decided to list the papers identified in order of relevance to my study. In this context I defined relevance by number of implications of for adolescent SM/SNS use.

## 2.3 Review of Literature

There were various themes that were highlighted through the following research. There was a recurring discussion about aspects of adolescent development. This included social skills, psychological, identity/sexual, and academic development.

Adolescent social skills development was discussed by the authors in sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, and 2.3.6. The bulk of this discussion was covered in 2.3.1 where the authors discussed social skills in the context of belonging. The studies quoted by Allen et al (2014) are linked to both positive and negative influences. As discussed below belonging was one aspect of Social Connectedness (SC). Overall, I found the discussion to be somewhat superficial and lack any meaningful psychological impact. There was a discussion of SC in light of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci and Ryan, 1991), but a predominant focus of mechanistic actions and the proposed long-term impact of these. I found a similar descriptive approach by O’Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) (2.3.2). There was a discussion about the potential impact on social skills by these authors, but this seemed to be a list of potential shortcomings based on a top-down application of expert knowledge. Where Baker (2009) (2.3.6) discusses social skills, there did seem to be a clear application of psychology. It seemed that this Baker (2009) was predominantly focussed on drawing definitive conclusions, which was achieved, though there was a dominant narrative of adolescents having malignant dispositions that were exacerbated through SM use.

The discussion of psychological development amongst adolescents is raised in sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2. Allen et al (2014) (2.3.1) discussed psychosocial wellbeing in context of SC. There was once again a seemingly surface-level discussion of actions on SM for which positive and negative implications were explored. O’Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson

(2011) (2.3.2) discussed the term Facebook depression. Whilst this was relatively short discussion in the context of their article, it was the only consideration of psychological development. I was not convinced by the argument in-support of this fairly new phenomenon. However, I did feel that it was necessary to consider the implications, which given the fairly new status of Facebook depression was predominantly the same as depression.

The impact of SM on identity/sexual development during adolescence is discussed in 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.4, and 2.3.5. Once again, the exploration of this aspect of adolescent development is in the context of SC. Allen et al. (2014) (2.3.1) appeared to be able to draw more positive implications than negative. There was coherent, and seemingly in-depth discussion of adolescents being able to find themselves and similar people because of SM. O’Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) (2.3.2) seemed to list as many possible negative and potentially dangerous things that adolescents might become embroiled with as a result of engagement with SM. That is not to say they don’t occur, but I felt as though this paper was somewhat pessimistic about the use and application of SM amongst this age group. Sections 2.3.4 and 2.3.5 by Pujazon-Zazik and Park (2010) and Cookingham and Ryan (2015) respectively, refreshingly looked at adolescent access to SM as a positive tool where identities could be tried on, or where changing landscapes of communication facilitated and nurtured the capacity to refine and polish their identity/sexuality. Cookingham and Ryan (2015) did seem to relate a change in social norms to greater amount of risk-taking. Though, it is possible that there was an over-reporting of certain actions.

There was a consideration of academic development in sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3. O’Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) (2.3.2) have this section in their article, though there is nothing of any note actually considered. I find it interesting that they chose to include this section. Khan, Wohn and Ellison (2014) (2.3.3) highlighted findings which implied that users from high socio-economic statuses and with a higher degree of competence when using the Internet, were more likely to use Facebook for academic purposes. There was not much else discussed with regards to academic development through SM.

There is some literature in this area of research. Much of the following forms a good starting point for areas where more research is required. These are established by

considering the questions raised by the research and review papers as below. Some of the conclusions appear to be valid; others appear to be influenced by factors that will differ based on circumstances of connecting to SM/SNSs. These include, but are not limited to, reason the SM/SNSs were accessed, SES, academic achievement, and where the SM/SNS is accessed from. Other more consistent factors included gender and the number of friends that a user has.

Most of the research outlined below employed a top-down understanding of what users did on SM/SNSs. Initially, many of them considered SM/SNSs to be the same as other forms of digital communication, which I do not feel to be the case. Thereafter, the top-down approach would create a preordained number of different activities and reasons for SM/SNS, and digital communication use. Given the large amount of variance amongst the literature explored in this chapter, it is likely that there are other reasons adolescents connect with their peers and those around them through digital conduits. If the understanding is predefined, then it is likely that the interpretations may also be predefined. This is also impacted by the predominantly quantitative nature of research that currently exists.

Throughout much of the literature, there appeared to be a generally accepted narrative of *naïveté* on behalf of adolescents. Many authors appeared to promote the discourse that these adolescents would be unsafe and would need external intervention. Additionally, there were questions raised about the recognition between this virtual life, created through SM/SNSs and the real world. These included whether the participants knew the difference and the affect to which they used the two. This could be explained by the fact that this literature tends to be focussed within the health sector, as opposed to psychological or educational. There is some implicit theory within the studies mentioned above (child development) as well as some explicit theory (SDT), given the relationship with the health/medical perspectives; there is no mention of impact on education.

The literature explored identified some of the areas that have been impacted by the growth of this phenomenon, which may or may not be intentional. Examples of this include the use of friend as a verb (Khan, Wohn, and Ellison, 2014), and the ease with which others may be considered our friends. There were potential benefits, such as those offered to SM/SNS users with social anxiety difficulties. There were also potential

drawbacks, including the audit trail that could allow almost anyone to document any *faux pas* a user may be unfortunate enough to make.

Given my considerations, questions, and current understanding, the section 2.5 outlines the research question of my research.

## 2.4 Review Papers Identified

### 2.4.1 Review Paper One

- Allen, Ryan, Gray, et al. (2014). Social media use and social connectedness in adolescents: The positives and the potential pitfalls.

#### 2.4.1.1 Summary of Article

This is a review article of the papers that have been published which consider the positives and negatives of adolescent use of SM/SNSs and any subsequent impact on SC. The authors use a triad model of SC, Sense of Belonging, Psychosocial Wellbeing, & Identity development and Processes. There are mixed reports of the relationship that exists between SM and SC. The authors' suggestion is an interaction that consists of both positive and negative interactions. They maintain that this has created a paradox for SC. Tools and resources such as SM/SNSs have created an environment for a development of SC. But these tools can also simultaneously foster or enable an atmosphere that creates feelings of alienation and ostracism. The authors indicate findings that have highlighted the importance of SC during adolescence, which can be useful as they add that adolescents are the most enthusiastic users of SM/SNSs. They indicate that this importance suggests that humans have an innate psychological drive to be a member of a group, or to belong to something. They also refer to SDT (Deci and Ryan, 1991), a triadic model of human motivation, sense of relatedness (belonging), sense of mastery (competence), and autonomy (control and routine). Of the three elements of SDT, they only really consider the importance and relevance of relatedness in the use of SM/SNS by adolescents. This seems somewhat reductionist and could perhaps be underestimating the role of the other areas of SDT.

The authors are explicit about which search keywords and the inclusion/exclusion criteria used. They included ages from 11-19, creating three categories, early adolescents, adolescents or emerging adolescents. Sites like Facebook and Twitter, which the authors explicitly name in keyword searches, have policies stating that the minimum age to create a profile is 13. The authors do not make mention of this but it is assumed that the research they based their findings on would have taken the necessary precautions and taken this in to account.

#### 2.4.1.2 Findings in Relation to Adolescent use of Social Media

Allen et al. (2014) initially discussed the importance and relevance of belonging during adolescence.

*Positive influences on belonging by Social Media;* the authors cite research where 32 children were interviewed on the basis of their casual exchanges through digital platforms, including SM/SNSs and general online platforms. The results indicated that the use of these sites helped to foster belonging. They suggested that SM/SNSs enabled staying in touch, thus fulfilling a need to belong. The findings really suggested that generalised digital communication was the overall enabling tool but SM/SNSs were implicated as having a role within this, though this was not made to look unique. The authors did indicate that that had included SM/SNSs in the general umbrella term digital communication. The authors argue that in any case the capacity to communicate creates the perception of social integration and bonding. There is an implicit condition within this finding, which appears to indicate that the children were communicating and interacting in a healthy manner. Whilst the overall discussion is about belonging, is it a valid sense of belonging if one is being manipulated by their membership and affiliation to the group? There were mixed findings for this sense of belonging as it was indicated that as the number of children amongst peer groups on SM/SNSs increased, so too did the risk of the children being ostracised.

*Negative influences on belonging by Social Media;* the authors suggest that SM is still a relatively new phenomenon, as such, so too are the words/phrases used to describe the impact and experiences of the users. That is to say, there is a new or evolving language describing the engagement with SM. The authors explain the development of the phrase cyberostracism to explain the sense of exclusion that might occur or that could be

experienced through online conduits. Namely, SM/SNSs. Cyberostracism, as outlined here, has been considered a threat to a sense of belonging. It seems appropriate that there is a distinction made between ostracism and cyberostracism. Whilst it can appear that the two seem too similar to be distinct, the rapidly developing and evolving nature of online communication, especially SM/SNSs, could allow users a growing number of ways to ostracise others. Additionally, the use of the term cyber would indicate that this is occurring in a virtual space. This could mean that people who would not necessarily feel or be ostracised in a face-to-face environment would need to engage with SM/SNSs in a way to ensure that they are not ostracised here too.

The authors of this paper cited research around manufactured incidents of cyberostracism where it was shown to have a detrimental impact on belonging across a range of different age groups. The 13–14 year old group appeared to be the more impacted than their older/younger peers. Real life replications of this manufactured cyberostracism could be on sites such as Facebook and Twitter where private groups can be created, users can be blocked, users can be denied access to friend or follow others. The authors consider such real-life applications areas for future research. Being able to friend or follow simply means to be in a position where the profile creator/owner allowed any such request, and access has been granted.

The authors then discussed the importance and relevance of psychosocial wellbeing during adolescence.

*Positive influences on psychosocial wellbeing by Social Media;* the authors found that socially anxious children and young people could be potentially encouraged to disclose to their peers. As well as this, the shy and lonely were also using online chat as a tool to talk. It is not clear how linked this is to SM/SNSs or other online chat tools. That is to argue, if a person's offline loneliness is a result of self-exclusion then how likely are they to form bonds with peer group online? The primary area for adolescents of adding friends online is through existing/offline networks. This lonely group would need to create friendships initially online which might then become offline friends also. The authors mention additional benefits of online chatting as the capacity to met new people and reduced feelings of shyness/anxiousness. These findings were discussed amongst these groups (shy/anxious) in line with social compensation hypothesis (Laghi, Schneider, Vitorulis et al., 2013). This hypothesis stipulates that children and young

people who have difficulties in face-to-face interactions are supported/encouraged by the use of SM/SNSs (as well other online tools) as they reduce the need to interpret, respond or exhibit social cues. The authors added that children with learning difficulties/disabilities could take advantage of this aspect of SM/SNSs communication as part of wider online communication. They added that findings indicated that increased rates of loneliness amongst children groups with learning difficulties/disabilities. Once again, it is not explored if this is a self-inflicted exclusion.

*Negative influences on psychosocial wellbeing by Social Media;* the authors suggest that the potential and power given to socially anxious, shy, and/or lonely adolescents could become detrimental if they dissuaded or discouraged themselves from offline social communication. This is by virtue of their perceived positive or beneficial online social communication/interaction. They argued that young people who felt that their online skills were better than they might actually be, because of how poor they might have perceived their offline skills to be, would not necessarily be motivated to seek offline communications and interactions. There would be little motivation to seek offline interactions because they are not good at it. Though it is possible that if the online communication tended towards developing face-to-face interactions that this problem could be eliminated. Examples of this could be where users meet online through a Facebook group where users have a common interest such as sports teams or music bands. Where they might develop deeper friendships with each other away from that specific group, they could offer invitations of going to sports/music events, in a user-generated desensitisation of their anxieties.

The authors then went on to discuss the importance and relevance of identity development during adolescence.

*Positive influences on identity development by Social Media;* the authors found that research in this area suggested adolescents (up-to 19) linked their Social Identity Gratification (SIG) with the frequency of their SM/SNS use. SIG (Barker, 2012; Harwood, 1999) is active seeking for reinforcement that one engages with for their own social beliefs/identity and the subsequent impact one receives as a result. This positive link was reinforced when the young people used their time on SM/SNSs to expose themselves to positive messages about peers in their generation/age group. The authors suggest that adolescents use SM/SNSs to attempt to develop healthy or positive self-

images. The focus was on college freshmen (up to 19). At this stage the first year college students are likely to have met new people from their new contexts hence the necessity to reinforce their pre-existing self-image. Would the same be true for High School students? Or young people who had not gone to college and hence not had a change of circumstances? Or people who had and have kept amongst the same or similar peer group for a number of years?

The authors cited research that indicated that High School students who used SM/SNSs were able to create, sustain and enhance their identities. The focus of the research was a number of support groups on Facebook for Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Content analysis of information on the groups' pages highlighted that young people tended to favour comments that portrayed themselves as positive way and disassociated or distanced themselves from remarks to the contrary. The authors suggested that this mechanism allowed an element of positive self-branding for these individuals. These were specific support groups for ADHD, a diagnosable medical condition which requires input from various medical professionals as a validation of a medically/objectively identifiable disorder. Would these findings be true of groups for popular cultural trends such as musicians, artists, sports teams, or even political affiliations? Especially where there is a reliance on third parties to remain popular or even have a positive value or influence.

The authors then focussed on individual's identities rather than group identities. They found that research indicated that young people who communicated with peers across multi-modal platforms had a clear and more consistent view of themselves. I interpreted multi-modal platforms to mean both online and offline in different contexts. The authors' arguments being that these children and young people were able to continually present themselves in the same way across social domains. These findings were indicative of children and young people speaking and engaging with pre-existing peers online. What if these peers were initially discovered through online communication? The reason this poses an interesting phenomenon is because of the show-reel aspect of manufactured and maintained profiles on SM/SNSs. These pre-define a person prior to any face-to-face interaction. This pressure of being expected to be a certain way, to remain friend-worthy, could then influence/impact in both positive or negative way a persons' perception of themselves.



*Negative influences on identity development by Social Media*; the authors argue that SM/SNSs are a platform to accentuate various aspects of identity such as gender and sexual identity. They maintain that this can be problematic as dating and other romantically motivated past-times can become recreational. This can in turn promote experimental and risky behaviour. Whilst calculated risk taking and experimentation might be considered the basis for such past-times, the authors noted that less calculated and unnecessarily risky behaviour could lead to malicious exploitation. The authors cite this as the reason that there are such high numbers of young people sharing explicit media (both images and video) of themselves and their sexual desires on SM. However, sites like YouTube, which the authors name explicitly, have strict policies against the sharing of such explicit content, most especially of young people (YouTube, 2014). If this is not available to children and young people on mainstream SM/SNSs, will they then resort to using more underground/risky platforms to do this? However, this can be interpreted more as a desire to belong or be accepted than an exploration of whom might be sexually active.

In this paper, the authors outlined research that found as many as 40% of adolescent females posted pictures online of themselves in half-clothed states, tight-fitting (figure revealing), or in see-through clothes. They found that the adolescents were also conflicted between the need to appear popular, which could be achieved readily through this explicit depiction but simultaneously circumvent any accusations of promiscuity or sexual impropriety. Sexual identity, an element of an individual's identity, was also something that the child or young person wanted to explore with their peers through SM/SNSs but could gain unwanted or unwarranted attention from other adults, family members, or more dangerously, sexual predators.

Limitations for this review and areas for future research were established in the conclusions. Unfortunately, given the academic nature of research and ease of selecting convenience samples from college campuses many of these may not be addressed. Additionally, as there are implications with regards to a sexual awakening how would this be perceived in conservative cultures? Where it might be perceived as an infiltration, corruption, or perversion of said cultures' moral and ethical stances (religious or otherwise). Are these findings for Western populations transferrable to their non-Western counterparts? Nevertheless, the authors maintain that there are

practical implications, which should inform the strategies and interventions for teacher, parents, and EPs. How effectively is it being disseminated?

This review paper identified further reading as shown in appendix F

#### 2.4.2 *Review Paper Two*

- O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011). The impact of social media on children, adolescents, and families.

##### 2.4.2.1 *Summary of Article*

The authors recognise that SM/SNSs, are and seem likely to remain, a routine daily activity for adolescents. They explored the impact of SM/SNSs on said adolescents and their families. The authors, both paediatricians, outline the benefits and drawbacks of access to, and use of, SM/SNSs. They add helpful information for parents and carers, but given that this is a scholarly article, published in a paediatric journal, it is likely that it will be accessed and disseminated by professionals. Of which, it is likely to be mostly especially skilled specialists. Whilst the literature seems to be written in an accessible manner, the fact that *Pediatrics*, advertises as “the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics”, it is unlikely to be read by relevant but unrelated professionals, such as teachers, for whom this information could prove invaluable. Additionally, other educational practitioners, such as EPs, would only conceivably encounter this article if they were searching for it.

The article considers a wide range of implications, such as the input and influence of advertising on buying behaviour. However, the layout and structure appear to imply a bias towards the negative implications. Additionally, there seems to be a pessimistic view of the adolescents’ understanding and acceptance of these shortcomings. Whilst this might be a valid point for the younger age-group users, adolescents might consider it patronising and an underestimation of their ability and conscious use of SM/SNSs. The article takes a negative stance on the capacity for child and adolescent self-regulatory skills. Once again, these findings might be valid for use amongst younger age-group users, but older adolescents may well have these regulatory skills. It would appear that this paper seems to over-emphasise these impacts for the purposes

establishing a paediatrician role. The suggestions given for paediatricians only seem to focus on forewarning parents of the potential pitfalls, there are no remarks to the benefits that were considered earlier. Or maybe these problems are much deeper than mainstream views can conceive.

#### 2.4.2.2 Findings in Relation to Adolescent use of Social Media

*Socialisation and communication*; the authors list a series of activities, far from exhaustive, that adolescents are engaging with and the proposed benefits of that they serve within this area. There is no exploration as to why they may be important, or otherwise, from a psychological standing. The application of psychology is an implicit device, which could potentially undermine the actual benefit.

*Enhanced learning opportunities*; the authors seem to pay lip service to this section, or rather ink service. This section is the shortest paragraph and indicates either, paediatricians not necessarily being interested in the potential learning opportunities in this area, or a genuine belief that enough is being done.

*Accessing health information*; the authors rightly suggest that there is an abundance of information readily available and freely accessible on the Internet, and potentially through SM/SNSs. They add that it is imperative that parents inform their children of the necessity to use reliable sources, but how aware are parents of these sources? Professionals learn and are taught, but it is necessary to inform service users.

*Cyber-bullying and online harassment*; there was a distinction made between these two areas. The authors explored both the nature and purported incidences. Online harassment tends to occur less frequently than offline harassment. Cyber-bullying occurs more frequently than online harassment. There have been a number of cases that unfortunately have lead to victim suicide. Other cases have resulted in profound psychosocial outcomes. These can include depression, anxiety and isolation.

*Sexting*; this is both illegal and can have profound psychological impact, especially if pictures are viewed by anyone other than the intended recipient. The authors rightly suggest that given the nature of communication on SM/SNSs that this is a very possible outcome. There was no consideration of the impact of unsolicited sexting, whereby the

recipient is not willing/expecting these messages. Given the nature of psychological distress as a result of public indecency/flashing, it is possible that there are implications if these are received in an electronic fashion.

*Facebook depression*; this is recognised as a fairly new phenomenon when teens/pre-teens spend much of their time on SM and SNSs. There is no mention of adults' susceptibility, given its fairly new status; maybe there is not enough prevalence yet. The authors suggest that the risk is exacerbated when the use and intensity of the level of interaction with peers through SM/SNSs exceeds the real-life level by too much. Little is known about the effects and impact of Facebook depression. The authors suggest that adolescents could well feel isolated and result to seeking support from negative sites. These can in-turn promote substance abuse, sexual impropriety, aggression, and self-destructive behaviours. But maybe they're just pathologising typical development.

*Privacy concerns*; the authors argue that where SM/SNS users don't know the other users that they interact with, there is little recourse to a validation of who that person is. Wider implications are that once something exists online, it can prove difficult, if at all even possible, to remove. Any seemingly innocent comments and clicks made, media uploaded, or anything shared, which has a negative connotation could have detrimental effects later in life.

This review paper identified further reading as shown in appendix F

#### 2.4.3 Review Paper Three

- Khan, Wohn, and Ellison (2014). Actual friends matter: An internet skills perspective on teens' informal academic collaboration on Facebook.

##### 2.4.3.1 Summary of Article

This study looked at the factors that predict the likelihood of informal academic collaboration specifically on Facebook. The authors used a self-report (survey) of 690 high-school students in a suburban midwestern state. Collaborative learning was defined as a situation where two or more people learn or attempt to learn together. The authors

argue that this makes social interaction imperative. However, by doing this they assume that the phrase social interaction can be applied equally to interactions via a conduit, such as SM/SNSs and face-to-face interactions. The researchers argue that SM/SNSs, such as Facebook, are ideal for the facilitation of this type of social interaction with features such as individual/group messaging and groups. Given the virtual nature of SM/SNSs, it is possible to simultaneously be in more than one group or room. The authors make reference to developing and sustaining a number of friends in various networks. For the purpose of the study, the authors assume that the availability of these friends/contacts is reflective of the off-line relationships that the users share. The authors were happy to determine that there were a number of factors that appeared to predict informal academic collaboration. An interesting conclusion made was that, due to the impact of informal collaboration, there is a role for schools to ensure that that they teach pupils higher order skills. As well as this, they should also invest in building the students' online search skills.

An interesting point to note is the use of the word friend as a verb. This is used in the study, but comes about as a result of the word 'friended' describing actions on SM/SNSs (Khan, Wohn, and Ellison, 2014). This may lead to a necessity to redefine what, or who, a friend can, or should be. Are SM/SNSs creating another dimension in the social space between friends? Does being friends in the physical-world mean being friends in the virtual-world? Are SM/SNSs merely exploiting an element of friendship that, until now, may have just been an untapped resource? That is, a fairly comprehensive list of all of our friends and everything about them.

#### 2.4.3.2 Findings in Relation to Adolescent use of Social Media

*Course grades*; the authors found that students who self-reported higher grades (As&Bs) were more likely to use Facebook for class-related academic collaboration. Whilst correlation cannot imply causation, this is an interesting finding that could allow school and educational staff the opportunity to support these students.

*Role of socio-economic status (SES)*; generally, speaking, as SES went up, so too did academic collaboration through Facebook. There were some findings to suggest that as SES went down, use of Facebook could allow support from friends. The authors predominantly linked a lower SES to a lower likelihood of Internet access. Whilst this

may be the case, it could also pertain to a decreased focus, attention to, or impression or academic skills. Similarly, the SES would also be likely to affect the culture/attitude of these participants too.

*Internet access and Internet skills;* the authors' findings appeared to indicate that whilst reliable access was a factor, higher order Internet skills were a more pertinent factor when it came to predicting informal academic collaboration. This was justified by the discussion of Internet access away from school but also away from the home, in libraries/café's etc. It stands to reason that Internet skills are a better predictor because without the skills, access would be moot. I would suggest that there is a role for reasons of use to be explored in this context. That is to say, if students only used Facebook to communicate with distant friends/family, would access or skills matter?

*Actual friends matter;* the phrase actual friends was given to friends who the participants knew both offline and online. Total friends was the phrase used to describe the total number of friends on Facebook. As the number of actual friends increased, so did the likelihood of informal academic collaboration. The number of total friends was not considered to be a reliable predictor of informal academic collaboration. However, given the fact that SM/SNSs are a global phenomenon, communicating with people in different time zones makes it possible that this increased response rates described by the authors. This is potentially an around the clock phenomenon.

*Instrumental role of Facebook friends;* the authors found that their hypothesis of instrumental support from Facebook friends was positively related to class-related academic collaboration on Facebook. The measure was aimed at finding out the extent to which participants felt they could access information, resources, and help from friends. Thus it is valid to assume that if a user's friends are academically inclined, the user is likely to be implicitly encouraged to be academically inclined. Is there a role for school-based (social skills and/or learning) interventions to include friending individuals on Facebook?

There were no specific papers in this article that matched the inclusion/exclusion criteria for this literature review.

#### 2.4.4 Review Paper Four

- Pujazon-Zazik and Park (2010). To tweet, or not to tweet: Gender differences and potential positive and negative health outcomes of adolescents' social internet use.

##### 2.4.4.1 Summary of Article

This review paper gave an overview of peer-reviewed literature and national data (in America) on adolescent use of online SM, gender differences in online SM, and the potential positive and negative health outcomes from adolescents online SM use. The paper generalises the findings of online SM and general Internet use. In this paper the authors used national data to identify socioeconomic, and gender differences amongst adolescents, but much in the same way as authors in section (2.3.1) they contain these findings within general Internet use.

##### 2.4.4.2 Findings in Relation to Adolescent use of Social Media

*Internet and identity formation;* the Internet was noted as being able to offer all users the opportunity to try on the different identities. In their research the authors reported that of the 687 interviewed 12-20 year olds, 8.6% had presented themselves as members of the opposite sex. The authors did not necessarily describe the situations within which these claims occurred. It is possible that these presentations were characters in games. It is also possible that the participants were pretending to be someone else for the purpose of a prank, or trick, rather than an exploration of who they were as an individual. Whilst these can all perhaps be seen as experimenting with other identities, the motivations and driving forces for these choices/explorations can be very different.

*Focus of social networking sites;* the authors maintain that an increasing trend in the formation of new SNSs today is age of the target demographic, which is becoming younger. The authors claimed that some sites had profiles for children as young as two. However, they recognised that this is most likely the result of overly zealous parents, rather than a disproportionately large number of prodigious children. There was a short discussion around parental consent/knowledge of the children's use of SNSs. Some sites were more proactive than others. While this appeared noble, there was little, if any, way of being able to enforce these rules in a real-world setting.

*Use of social networking sites;* the authors offered an overview of the general reported use of SNSs, in a similar fashion to the figures reported in the OfCOM report discussed in chapter 1. The figures here claimed that more than 91% of the SNS users suggested that they would do so to stay in touch with friends that they saw regularly. Whereas, 82% did so to stay in touch with friends they did not see regularly. The authors report that 72% used it to make plans, 49% used it to make friends, and 17% used it to flirt. There was no exploration as to what these terms mean, nor was there any exploration of whether these actions had occurred over the SNS as well as anywhere else.

*Gender differences amongst SNS users;* the authors claimed that there was conflicting evidence of differences amongst genders. Throughout the rest of this paragraph, the word older will be used to refer to 15–17 year olds, and younger will refer to 12–14 year-olds. Given the conflicting nature of the data, many of the conclusions were not possible to make across multiple age groups. Overall older females used SNSs more than their male counterparts (54%vs70%), a similar response was found when considering the percentage of females versus males who had created a profile on a SNS (57%vs70%). These figures indicate that more males had SNS profiles than the number of males who had claimed to use SNS. Additionally, there was no description given of the difference between using and creating a profile. When describing the activities that these users partook in, females posted more pictures than their male counterparts (54%vs40%) with those figures changing to (67%&48%) in the older age category respectively. In the younger age category, there was no difference between males and females. Interestingly, males were twice as likely than their female counterparts to upload videos (19%vs10%). There are some SNSs where it is only possible to upload videos; if there is a higher male subscription on this site then it is possible this is the explanation of this difference. Alternatively, it is clear that these findings indicate a different purpose of use of SNSs between genders, unfortunately there is no explanation of which sites were accessed and why.

This review paper identified further reading as shown in appendix F.



#### 2.4.5 *Review Paper Five*

- Cookingham and Ryan (2015). The impact of social media on the sexual and social wellness of adolescents.

##### 2.4.5.1 *Summary of Article*

The authors discussed the evolution of social norms in what they described to be the changing landscape of social interaction. Given that norm is a term of reference to the average or typical, the authors imply that this change is a new phenomenon. The change was to be expected, the nature of the change is where the focus should be placed. That is to say, this is perhaps the first time that researchers are able to consider change within the digital landscape of SM/SNSs. However, over time previous developments have occurred within the landscapes of the technological advancements and resources of the time. Previously, the mass production of televisions and telephones may have impacted on the social norms. The difference being that TVs and telephones having changed the way we were able to communicate remained rather static. The researchers in this paper appear to place some, but not much, emphasis on the advancements that occur within SM/SNSs. These include, but are not limited to, going from a capacity to upload pictures and write messages, to uploading videos and having real-time video chats (Facebook, 2014).

The author's view/description of SM/SNSs appears to be somewhat reductionist, listing just the actions the adolescents are completing rather than considering the underpinning reasons that these may be occurring. Additionally, they claim to consider SM/SNSs are used as an active or interactive action, whereby there is a reciprocal relationship between the user and the SM/SNS. Claiming that adolescents real intentions can become clear through this medium.

The mini-review suggested that the participants had predominantly negative experiences, jeopardising the sexual and social wellness of this age group. The authors claim that healthcare providers should remain up-to-date with this changing landscape and continue to work with adolescents in this way. Perhaps they've under-estimated the positive impact and wellness-building qualities that could exist.

#### 2.4.5.2 Findings in Relation to Adolescent use of Social Media

*Changing social norms and the promotion of high-risk behaviour;* the authors claimed that there was a large section of the participant population that claimed to partake in risky behaviour with regards to a sexualised behaviour or sexual health. Additionally, there was a small section of the participant population who had reported partaking in protective behaviour. The conclusion made from this was the social norm now reflected that it was ok/acceptable to partake in these more risky and less protective behaviours. The argument was that the participants were intentionally over-reporting their actual behaviours on the basis that they would have seen this trend in their peer's SM/SNS report. As such, there was a suggestion that SM/SNSs had become a super-peer, influencing the adolescents.

*Offline consequences of online behaviour;* The authors described the case of minors, children who had not yet reached the age for sexual consent, who had exchanged explicit images of themselves through SM/SNSs and other digital/electronic media. They were breaking the very rules that had been developed and put in place to protect them. As these children were so young, they appear to be unaware of the potential repercussions of their actions.

*Utilisation of Social Media for education;* the authors discussed the use of SM/SNSs by experts to educate the adolescents about the dangers of risky sexual behaviour. They added that this was a helpful medium to balance the information that the adolescents might be receiving on SM/SNSs but the novelty of the medium should not let it replace comprehensive and face-to-face programmes. The findings from the offline consequences of online behaviour and changing social norms and the promotion of high risk behaviour sections, seemed to indicate that the peer influence element of SM/SNSs are what enabled it to affect the social norms, including the development of SM/SNSs as a super-peer. If this is the case, then experts should either seek to invest heavily in reshaping potentially detrimental norms, or educate themselves about the detrimental norms and reach this group in another way. A bit-part exercise, trying to affect change would appear to be a waste of money, time and resources.

There were no specific papers in this article that matched the inclusion/exclusion criteria for this literature review.

#### 2.4.6 Review Paper Six

- Barker (2009). Older adolescents' motivations for social network site use: The influence of gender, group identity, and collective self-esteem.

##### 2.4.6.1 Summary of Article

The author used a self-report scale to identify motives for older adolescents' use of SM/SNSs. In total, 803 freshmen were sent an email containing a link to a Survey Monkey page. The Survey Monkey page contained a series of scales to measure various aspects of SM/SNS use. As such, it was designed with a pre-ordained number of areas of interest. It is not clear if all those who were contacted managed to respond, from the total number of responses sixty-nine responses were removed for either having incomplete questionnaire, or on the basis of age. The most common SM/SNS used was Facebook (54%), followed by MySpace (44%). The rest of the responses indicated use of site called Friendster, or were undisclosed. There was no explanation of any overlap or if common use pertained to duration or number of visits to that site. There was a variance of ethnicities amongst the participant sample, and an approximate 60:40 split, female-to-male. The claims in the paper seem to be related predominantly to college students. The findings amongst adolescents also indicate a malignant pre-disposition, suggesting that they openly change their allegiances of ingroup-outgroup identity. If this is true then there is a profound implication for the socio-emotional development of such adolescents. If this is not a valid finding, then is misleading, and perhaps undermines the true nature of the motivation that it seeks to find.

##### 2.4.6.2 Findings in Relation to Adolescent use of Social Media

*Group identification/collective self-esteem and communications with peer group;* the study found that participants who were able to readily identify with their ingroups were more likely to use SM/SNSs to communicate with their respective ingroups. It was suggested that as this ability to identify decreased, so too did the communication with this group.

*Group identification/collective self-esteem and social compensation;* it was suggested that all males sought social compensation through the use of SM/SNSs and only females with a negative collective self-esteem sought social compensation.

*Group identification/collective self-esteem and social identity gratifications;* females with a negative collective self-esteem sought SIG, males seeking SIG was not related to their collective self-esteem.

The findings of the two preceding areas of findings seem to indicate that males could be more socially anxious. Or, perhaps given the participant population, this selection of freshmen appears to be unhappy with their social groups and unable to do anything about it. As such, they compensate for this through the virtual social platform afforded to them by SM/SNSs.

*Females and communications with peer groups;* this was the overall highest reason for SM/SNS use but there was a significant different between males and females. Is this a reflection of the culture of the stay at home female and the outgoing/alpha male?

*Males and learning;* overall, learning was not a common motivation for the use of SM/SNS. However, males tended to use SM/SNSs for learning significantly more than their female counterparts. Why does this happen? Does this have implications in the classroom? What does the learning relate to?

*Other gender effects;* there were some differences noted between males/females.

*Interactions: gender, group-in-self, collective self-esteem, and SNS motives;* there were differences between genders for social compensation, SIG, communications with peers and learning. The study suggests that there is a difference between genders for motives for SM/SNS use, does this apply across age groups? And, how important is proficiency of use of SM/SNSs?

There were no specific papers in this article that matched the inclusion/exclusion criteria for this literature review.

#### 2.4.7 Review Paper Seven

- Best, Manktelow, and Taylor (2014). Online communication, social media and adolescent wellbeing: a systematic narrative review.

##### 2.4.7.1 Summary of Article

This review paper gives an overview of online communications with regards and reference to the impact of social media technology (SMT) on the mental wellbeing of young people. SMT refers to, predominantly Internet based, communicative platforms. The most common type of SMT referred to was social networking sites (SNS). SNS were operationalised as websites with a two-fold function; allowing the formation/development of online communities, and enabling users to share created content. This review considered forty-three papers, claiming that contradictory evidence for the impact of service delivery through SNS but suggesting that health and social services were readily using SMT to try to reach this population group. The authors maintain that appropriately designed programmes need to be developed in light of the wide-spread use of SMT and limited evidence for the efficacy of the programmes currently in circulation (Best, Manktelow, and Taylor, 2014).

##### 2.4.7.2 Findings in Relation to Adolescent use of Social Media

*Cyber-bullying*; within the forty-three articles considered through the review, four focussed on cyber-bullying. The authors claim that there was large amounts of variance in the nature and scope of the cyber-bullying itself. The only definitive claim about cyber-bullying that was made was the supportive mechanism of the offline social support that a user had access to. This had created a buffer that reduced the detrimental effect of the cyber-bullying.

*Benefits of online social networking*; of the forty-three articles used for this review paper, thirteen claimed generic benefits of SMT and online communication. The authors of the review suggested that the findings suggested a predominant finding was that stigmatised groups can use SMT and SM as a safe/protective place to made disclosures. They claimed the findings indicated that the direct/instant access to emotional and empathic support reduced the barriers to making disclosures.

*Caveats to social networking;* In the review the authors claimed there were certain negative elements to the use of SMT. One specific claim was that online communication/technology was an inherently weaker form of interaction. It was suggested that this would in-turn lead to an increased risk of depression and/or social isolation. For females, one claim was simply having a profile on a SNS decreased psychological wellbeing and as the amount of time spent on SMT increased, so too did the risk of exposure to harm. Though no explicit claim was made about what type of harm.

*Future directions;* in this review the authors took the view that SMT which promote communicative rather than non-communicative purposes had a positive impact on wellbeing outcomes. They claim that SMT that promote communicative devices provide wellbeing benefits. To ensure the risk of harm is managed care and attention needs should be taken to the particular SMT being used, the communicative and non-communicative activities being used, and the social capital available to an individual. These elements were said to be able to stem the tide of the negative experiences young people had encountered (Best, Manktelow, and Taylor, 2014).

There were no specific papers in this article that matched the inclusion/exclusion criteria for this literature review.

#### 2.4.8 Review Paper Eight

- McCartney (2012). Social networking safety for children and adolescents.

##### 2.4.8.1 Summary of Article

This article was written as an informative paper aimed at nurses. The author was trying to inform and enhance the practice of these health professionals. There was a particular focus on safety. There is a predominant focus on the negative elements of SM/SNSs. The author appears to deliberately ignore the positive aspects of SM/SNSs, but it is not clear if this is because it is not within the scope of the paper. The author then gives instructions and tips for nurses going forward.

#### 2.4.8.2 Findings in Relation to Adolescent use of Social Media

*Social Media behaviour*; the authors list a series of behaviours that adolescents reportedly engage in online. As outlined above there is a focus on a negative with no mention of either the positives or the psychological mechanisms/driving forces behind the actions. Many of the scenarios appear to be scaremongering/highlighting a worst-case scenario, but this is not explicitly stated. Given the assumed purpose of this paper such a focus might be helpful. However, it could be detrimental if nurses who have little knowledge about the wider behaviours/interactions of adolescents online. Especially if the nurses assume that a large majority of the children engage with these behaviours, in excess.

There were no specific papers in this article that matched the inclusion/exclusion criteria for this literature review.

#### 2.4.9 Review Paper Nine

- Landoll, La Greca, and Lai (2013). Aversive Peer Experiences on Social Networking Sites: Development of the Social Networking-Peer Experiences Questionnaire (SN-PEQ).

##### 2.4.9.1 Summary of Article

The authors developed a questionnaire designed to measure the peer-experiences of SM/SNS users. Specifically, negative experiences. The authors outlined the pervasive use of SM/SNSs amongst the under 25 age group. There was a focus on peer victimisation of adolescents. Peer victimisation refers to the adolescents who have been the recipients of peer aggression. This included physical, mental, and emotional aggression. The authors then went on to reflect on the impact that this could have had on the socio-emotional development of these individuals. The authors included all digital/electronic social communications media, not just a specific focus on SM as defined in my study. This paper was negatively focussed. This is evidenced in the use of conjunctions to dilute the impact of positive experiences that adolescents may have had. This then allowed the dominant discourse of SNSs facilitating and fostering negative experiences. This was one of the few positive comments that were made about SNSs.

*“Although most SNS experiences enhance adolescents’ friendships and social communications, negative experiences can occur”*

(Landoll, Greca, & Lai, 2013; p. 696).

The authors set out to devise a measure for negative peer experiences on SM/SNSs; however, they appear to decontextualise the issue. If it was such a prominent issue, why is more not being done? Or, are SM/SNSs genuinely a ticking time bomb? Facebook was started in 2004 (Facebook, 2014). It has now existed for over a decade, there is almost a population of adolescents for whom SM/SNSs have been a lifetime’s worth of activity. What are the implications of this? Are the authors overestimating or underestimating the value of their research?

#### 2.4.9.2 Findings in Relation to Adolescent use of Social Media

There were no findings pertaining to adolescent use of SM/SNS that came from this study.

There were no specific papers in this article that matched the inclusion/exclusion criteria for this literature review.

### 2.5 The Research Question

Following the questions that the existing research raises, amongst others, it is imperative that we have an understanding of the experiences of using SM websites by the adolescents. As such, the current research asked the question:

*What are Adolescents’ Lived Experiences of Using Social Media?*

The sub-research questions contained within this question are:

- How can these experiences inform the practice of professionals?
- What are the implications of the lived experiences of Social Media by adolescents for Young People, Parents, Educational Psychologists (EPs), and other professionals?



## 2.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I outlined the search strategy (2.2) that I used, the inclusion/exclusion criteria that I employed (2.2.1), and the order in which I reviewed the articles that were returned given my specifications (2.2.2). I then gave an overview of the literature that I explored as part of the systematic literature review (2.3). In section 2.4, I explored and summarised each article in relation to SM. Next, I outlined my research question (2.5) and concluded by summarising this chapter (2.6).

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Overview**

In this chapter I will outline my research question (3.2). I will then go on to discuss my ontological and epistemological assumptions (3.3). Next, I will highlight the purpose of my research (3.4). I will then outline my use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (3.5), describe my research technique (3.6) and its design (3.7). After this, I will highlight my use of a pilot interview and adaptations made as a result (3.8). Next I will discuss the characteristics of my participant sample (3.9). I will then outline my data collection (3.10) and analysis (3.11). Finally, I will outline the validity (3.12) and ethical (3.13) considerations, as well as describing the relevance and impact of the research (3.14). There will also be a summary of the chapter (3.15).

### **3.2 The Research Question Restated**

As outlined in the previous chapter, the research question for the current study was:

*What are Adolescents' Lived Experiences of Using Social Media?*

The two sub-research questions are:

- How can these experiences inform the practice of professionals?
- What are the implications of the lived experiences of Social Media by adolescents for Young People, Parents, Educational Psychologists, and other professionals?

This research adheres to the distinctions between online communities, online communicative devices and SM, as outlined in the chapter 1.

### **3.3 Ontological and Epistemological Assumptions**

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) highlight the importance of acknowledging where one stands as a researcher and the impact that this might have on the research produced. In line with this notion and through the ideas put forward by Creswell (2003), I put my position forward in a two-stage process. I highlight the main paradigms within which

research can take place and then explain how my research fits within the paradigm with which I have aligned myself.

### 3.3.1 Research Paradigms

Paradigms within the field of research are often described as complex. This can be expected as they seek to outline the *weltanschauung*, or world-view that influences both research and practice in any given field (Willis, 2007). It stands to reason then, that a researcher's *weltanschauung* is influenced by their ontological and epistemological position and vice versa. Crotty (1998) defines our ontological position as any, or all, of the assumptions we make about the nature of the world around us. Put simply, Willig (2001) suggested that it sought to establish what, and how, knowledge exists. Bryman (2012) describes our epistemological position as our attempt to understand the knowledge that exists in the world around us. That is, how we feel that this knowledge can be accessed and interpreted.

In the world of social research there are three main paradigms, positivism, social-constructivism, and critical realism (Robson, 2002). Positivism; reality is logical, observable and measurable in a purely objective sense. Social-Constructivism; reality is constructed in social settings and experiences. A constructivist paradigm would assume similar tenets with a focus on individual's construction, independently of the social setting, but existing within the social setting. Critical Realism; sees reality in a similar fashion to that explored in positivism but this reality is impacted upon by the players and characters present (Robson, 2002; Creswell, 2003). Fox et al. (2007) outline three worlds that co-exist for a practitioner-researcher to engage with. The Objective World; a world that exists independently of any, or all, human characteristics, including but not limited to language, culture, belief, or perception. The Socially Constructed World; is a world that exists in the spaces created when humans co-exist and interact. Fox et al. (2007) argue that this creates similarity and can give rise to ages and cultures that can evolve over-time. The Individually Constructed World; is a world where all that exists are an individual's experiences of the world where they are a character. This view argues that there is no shared understanding, rather a unique story that belongs to each person.

In this research, I am concerned with the world that exists around the adolescents when they engage with SM. Mertens (2005) describes research as inquirer and inquired-into being interlocked in an interactive process.

In-line with these and additional descriptions of research ontology put forward by Mertens (2005), my belief is that the current research adheres to a constructivist paradigm. My research position assumes that each participant's interaction with SM will be unique. As such, they would all have perceived and lived their experiences in a bespoke fashion. The constructivist position, allows me the freedom to explore a mode of data collection that is thought to be both personal and interactive. By making my values and beliefs explicit, I am able to root my findings in the context within which they exist. I am acknowledging the point of view of the SM users, the modes of use and the ends they are achieving through whichever means. The narrative that I use will have the privilege of being developed and based on the language that the adolescents use as they explain the world constructed around themselves (Burr, 2003).

### 3.3.2 *Social Constructivism*

Berger and Luckmann (1967) outlined the belief that our realities are our construction of the world around us. These are created within the social spaces where living organisms might exist. Therein, deriving the notion of *Social Constructionism*. If we combine this notion with Lewin's (1939) earlier explanation regarding people and their behaviours, where any behaviour can be considered the function of a person in a given environment, it can be argued that our realities are constructed every moment, between us and everything around us. Mertens (2005) an author of research methodology; discussed Socio-Cultural Theory (SCT) as the construction, rather than transmission, of knowledge across multiple contexts (Avramidis & Smith 1999; Burden 2005; Triplett; 2007). SCT is also referred to as social constructionism, though it is often confused with social constructivism, the cognitive description of knowledge. Hruby (2001) described constructionism to be the social description of knowledge. Constructivism and constructionism are similar. As such, both are valid applications of understanding of knowledge to this research. Over time, the way we, as humans, perceive the world and everything in it is an evolving process depending on where we are, whom we are with and how we perceive the actions and behaviours around us. Schwandt (2000) defined our realities as knowledge that is neither found nor discovered, but rather constructed.

That is to say, reality is an interactive process evolving around a person within their environment. Mertens (2005) argues that social constructionist theorists would go further to say that a researcher's role is to discover truth based on how each individual has constructed their knowledge and version of it.

Creswell (2003) identified assumptions within the explanations of social constructionism by theorists. It was suggested that such theories believed that individuals sought understanding of everyone and everything in their lives by experiencing it, and thus creating a subjective representation of the world in their mind (Sarantakos, 1998; Creswell 2003). As such, the most appropriate way to understand this representation would be to interact directly with these individuals, allowing them the time and space to explain their constructions.

In line with the aim and research question of the current study, the focus on the experiences of each individual participant whilst using SM, means that the most appropriate perspective and framework for me to use is social constructivism. The narratives and discourse that I had with any of the participants in my research, about the use of SM and the constituent elements of the SM websites, could feasibly have a frame of reference to each other purely in the form of language. So, to like an action or to follow is to carry out a specific positive action in SM terms. However, the social constructivist paradigm approach I am using allows the participants, the users of SM websites, to distinguish the actions like or follow to indicate the functions they serve in the overall experience in using SM.

### 3.4 *Purpose of the Research*

Fox, Martin and Green (2007) state that all research needs a purpose. It's important that all researchers, including practitioner researchers, become aware of this purpose as they are designing the research. They go further and add that the generation of research questions, development of theoretical underpinnings, development of a purpose, structuring of the research, and identification of techniques are interactive processes that should occur simultaneously (see Appendix G).

As there is relatively little known about adolescent SM use, following the framework of Robson (2002) the purpose of the research is Exploratory. Robson (2002) outlines the

purposes of exploratory research as an attempt to understand unknown situations, adding additional aspects as opportunities to question and seek new knowledge as other purposes. However, perhaps Robson's (2002) most crucial definition of exploratory research is the complete flexibility as well as investigation of phenomena. This research aimed to produce a rich understanding of the use of SM by adolescents. With respect to the findings outlined in chapter 1, this study could inform future research. It could also inform practice for EPs and others engaged with this age-group.

### 3.5 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

To fully understand why IPA is the most appropriate type of analysis for the current research, it is necessary to first understand its philosophical underpinnings, as well as the relevance of phenomenology in my study.

#### 3.5.1 Phenomenology and Interpretation

Husserl (1927), an influential figure in the development and discussion of phenomenology, argued that returning to the thing was an essential requirement and expectation of a researcher. Husserl (1927) had coined the concept of bracketing, which he explained as a skill of leaving behind what we know from our previous exposure to the thing and to try as best as possible to experience it in that moment. Husserl's (1927) use of the word bracketing has influences from the field of mathematics, where brackets are used explicitly to keep separate items for the purpose of the process. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) take this argument further by linking it to the work of Heidegger (1962/1927) who used the phrase *dasien* (a German phrase which translates to English as *da* 'there' and *sien* 'being') in relation to ideas around phenomenology. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) suggest that Heidegger's (1962/1927) *dasien* was in relation to the fundamental humanistic experiences of consciousness, perception, and awareness. Heidegger (1962/1927) maintained that it was not possible to be apart from any phenomena. By simply existing in the same frame of reference we have exposure and therefore our humanistic elements have made an interpretation. Heidegger (1962/1927) made reference to hermeneutics; also known as interpretation. When Merleau-Ponty (1962) discussed phenomenology, he accepted a necessity to "be in the world" (p.129) but explicitly highlighted the impossibility of being able to experience someone else's experience; any given experience is so uniquely encoded and embedded in context that

we may empathise but would need to settle with our interpretation of this experience (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) maintain that IPA stresses the importance of interpretation, suggesting a deliberate move away from the phenomenology of Husserl's time. That is, IPA is explicitly interested in the lived experiences of phenomena. It contextualises a participant's views within the experience of that individual and appreciates the rich and varying depth of these views and experiences (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009).

### 3.5.2 IPA and Hermeneutics

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) iterate a multi-dimensional level of hermeneutics available to IPA as a tool. One level of hermeneutics is the interactional relationship between some and all of the data simultaneously. They described a back and forth across the data that a researcher will experience in order fully appreciate the information available. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) highlight the fundamental aspect of reflection and reflexivity throughout this process.

The second level of hermeneutics involved in IPA is frequently described as the double hermeneutic (Smith and Osborn, 2003). Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) maintain that the hermeneutical process can occur over as many as 3 steps/stages (see Appendix H), a triple hermeneutic. Smith and Osborn's (2003) double hermeneutic did not highlight the third stage of the Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) three-fold understanding (see Appendix H): *Step 1*, the participants verbalise their experiences to the interviewers, thereby interpreting themselves; *Step 2* the researchers interpret what is being said, reporting findings as what they think is being said; *Step 3*, the readers make their interpretation as to what they feel the researchers are saying. At any stage of the hermeneutical process, the interpretation can be done on multiple levels. These can be explicit, what is actually said, or implicit, the undertone/what is unsaid (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). It is said that the relationship between the researcher and the data, the relationship between the researcher and the research, the researchers' awareness of themselves and the context that they might find themselves in, and the application of psychological knowledge by the researcher are key to the analysis of the data (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009).

### 3.5.3 *IPA in the Current Research*

Given the description of IPA and its use in developing a greater understanding of an experience, I felt that it was most appropriate for the current research. As discussed in chapter 1, the use of SM is a rapidly growing phenomenon. Each time an adolescent, or young person, interacts through this medium they are interacting with something seemingly intangible, using the SM as a conduit. However, the discussions during the interviews showed that however intangible the thing, there was a quantifiable product that the participants were able to share with me. IPA was the vessel through which I was able to objectify this thing and have an answer to the research question detailed at the start of this chapter. Given the exploratory nature of this research, any other form of analysis would have failed to recognise and appreciate the individual's relationship and context within which this experience was taking place.

### 3.6 *Research Technique*

In line with the purpose and theoretical underpinnings of this research, it was a qualitative design. Creswell (2003) defines qualitative research as a way of understanding and making claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives. Qualitative research also uses approaches that include discourse/narratives, uncovering rich, open-ended data that allowed me to develop a comprehensive understanding of meaning. The qualitative approach to this research offered an understanding and comparison of experiences, as well as the development of themes using the participants' language and constructs. Additionally, authors such as Greene and Hogan (2005) argue the extensive suitability of qualitative methods to the enquiry into children's unique and individual development of their world.

Arguments put forward by Mertens (2005) mean that a qualitative approach gave me access to an in depth description of the area of study. Mertens adds that qualitative research will allow the researcher to become a part of that world. This meant a richer understanding of the experience. The use of language between the participants and me situated and localised us as actors in a world where we became observers. By using a qualitative approach, I was a spectator, observing the participants engaging with SM through language and understanding the role it plays in their lives.



### 3.7 *Research Design*

Bryman (2012) defined the concept of research design as a framework to enable the data to be collected and analysed. This research is clearly invested in the exploration of the experiences of adolescents and young people. The research is designed to be qualitative (Creswell, 2003; Mertens 2005).

I included the use of a semi-structured interview. This enabled me to have an agenda for the interview but have the flexibility to let the participant direct the interview as he/she expressed his/her views, opinions and experiences (Smith and Eatough, 2007). Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) add that the impact of the developing a good quality interview schedule is a comfortable interaction, which will enable a detailed account of the experience that is being investigated. They add that when an IPA analysis is being implemented, a good quality interview is very helpful.

### 3.8 *Pilot Interview*

Given the importance of developing a good quality interview I used a pilot interview. Robson (2011) recommends the use of pilot interviews as an effective and efficient way of determining the validity and efficacy of both the interviewer and the interview. In my role as a TEP, I use interviewing skills and techniques as part of a collection of tools and resources in my day-to-day work. However, interviewing skills for qualitative research can have a definitively different purpose. This was another reason that I decided to follow the advice from Robson (2011) and complete a pilot interview.

Prior to interviewing participants for the research, I developed an interview schedule that I felt enabled me to answer the research question (see Appendix I). I trialled my initial interview schedule with one participant. He was a 15-year-old boy from outside of the locality within which my research is based. I refer to him as Anakin. He understood that this was a pilot interview, designed to help me collect data effectively. He and I worked together to ensure I was asking questions in a helpful way and he was able to express himself. Anakin gave me the permission to discuss the development of my interview schedule but asked that I did not disclose any of the information from our interview. Following the interview and Anakin's input, this interview schedule was developed (see Appendix J). As can be seen between the two interview schedules,

following the pilot interview my questions became prompts, encouraging participants to discuss their experiences with me.

### 3.9 *Characteristics of the Research Participants*

This research focussed on the experience of adolescents. This translated as children from within a secondary school's year 10 cohort. This age group was selected because these children were not yet under the pressure of looming final GCSE examinations. In addition to this, the youngest age at which children can register and create profiles on SM is 13 (Facebook, 2013). I chose not include 13-year-old children as they would have been more likely to have friendships with children under the age of 13. In excluding them and by extension their younger peers, I reduced the likelihood of encountering underage children using SM type websites during the current research.

Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) suggest six to 10 participants as the ideal for an IPA study. Due to the constraints of researching in the real world I interviewed six participants for this research, three of whom were boys. Every participant was a sibling and used at least one type of SM website as defined in chapter 1. The full profile of each participant is available in appendix K.

### 3.10 *Data Collection*

As a TEP on placement in a LA, part of my role is to act as a link EP for a number of schools in a patch. I approached one of the schools I had been assigned a part of my patch and explained the nature and purpose of this research. Initially, I made contact in writing (see Appendix L) and followed this up with a telephone call. I then gave the school a copy of the information sheet and consent forms for participants and parents (see Appendix L, M, & N).

Participants were randomly selected by using their student numbers from the school database. The sample can be defined as a multistage, random opportunity sample (Mertens, 2005). They were asked about their use of SM prior to the interview. The school then sent the information letters (see Appendix O) and consent forms (see Appendix M&N) to the parents of the randomly selected children, explaining the nature of the research and inviting them to take part. My contact details were included if the

parents had any further questions. I interviewed the six children who responded with both parent and participant permission. The interviews took place during the school day on the school premises throughout the Autumn term 2014 and Spring term 2015. For all but one interview the room was adjacent to the office of my contact person in the school.

The interviews lasted between 45 and 50 minutes and were recorded using a digital recording device, of which participants were aware. The use of the recording device allowed me to ensure focus and attention to the participant's responses. Each participant was offered the option of selecting his or her own pseudonym. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and made anonymous after all of the interviews were completed (see Appendix P). All copies of the audio recordings were destroyed once the data had been analysed. The anonymised data is being held in line with the guidelines on research data storage from University of East London (UEL).

### 3.11 *Data Analysis*

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) describe IPA as an attempt to understand the experience of a phenomenon in the words of a person who has lived through that phenomenon. The term IPA can be broken into its constituent elements: Interpretative and Phenomenological. The Interpretative element pertains to the expressed experience being interpreted by the researcher, a process called hermeneutics. The Phenomenological aspect can be explained by the idea of this hermeneutical process being acted upon (by a researcher) the expression (of a participant) of the said phenomenon (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009; Birkbeck, 2013).

In line with the tenets of IPA, I made position within the research and analysis explicit. These were used throughout the data analysis process to add an element of trustworthiness and an awareness of any biases and judgements that may have impacted the findings. I used the supervision/tutorial process through UEL and conversations with colleagues from placement to help ensure that any interpretations can be seen as valid.

### 3.12 Validity Issues

Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) argue that over time, validity measures of qualitative research have become more robust and useful. They add that following guidelines too mechanically could lead to subtle features of qualitative research being ignored. These could include non-verbal cues from participants. Yardley (2000) outlines four elements of qualitative research that can ensure that any data collected and analysed is as valid as possible: (1) *The data considered in context of where and how it was collected*, which includes who was present at collection and how each person is related to the research; (2) *The completeness of the data and its analysis*--how complete were the answers obtained and were participants offered the opportunity to elaborate?; (3) *Reflexivity*--is the researcher reflective of his own motivation(s), biases and perspectives?; (4) *Is it important?* Is there a point to the research?

In line with the suggestions from Yardley (2000), I ensured that any findings or analysis applied to or drawn from the data were considered within the context of how the data were collected and the inevitable power imbalance that can occur during any interview. I allowed the participants the opportunity to clarify any suggestions or answers that may have been made/given during the interview. I was able to be reflective of all aspects of my research as suggested by Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009). For the sake of transparency, I have recognised that I have a relationship with the research such that I am required to complete a piece of research to complete the Professional Doctorate in Educational Psychology course. Further to this, I have a keen interest in the world of technology that includes both software and hardware. I have identified below (see 3.13.5 *Relevance and the Impact of the Research*) the importance of the research.

### 3.13 Ethical Issues

In order to complete the research, I was required to submit my research methodology for consideration by the ethics board at UEL (see Appendix Q).

Fox, Martin & Green (2007) state that a major ethical consideration of research is the value that the said research might bring. If research is of no value, it has less chance to be disseminated and has less impact. Research of no impact has little ethical or moral standing. Further to this, they stipulate that the language used to engage with

participants should be accessible and their participation will not affect their care. Both governing bodies for EPs, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and the British Psychological Society (BPS), have issued guidelines for the practice of (practitioner) psychologists with regard to their involvement and direct work with the public/clients. Both of these issued guidelines stipulate that partaking in any work with an EP should, at least, do no harm (BPS, 2011; HCPC, 2013).

#### 3.13.1 Informed Consent

All participants, and their parents, were asked to give explicit written consent. This was in-line with the British Psychological Society's (BPS, 2011) guidelines for research with human participants. To ensure that any participants in my study gave their valid, informed and unambiguous consent to their participation I reiterated the agreements and their permission immediately verbally prior to the interview. As outlined in *3.10 Data Collection*, I initially obtained the written consent of parents by sending a letter to each parent whose child was invited to interview.

#### 3.13.2 Withdrawal

Although not necessarily in reference to practitioner research, Lindsay (2008) outlines ethics and value systems for use by EPs and EPs in Training (EPiT), also known as TEPs. One of these systems pertains to the respect of an individual's rights and dignity. The participants were able to withdraw their contribution if they wished. Participants were made aware of this fact and the voluntary nature of their agreement to partake in the research. In line with the guidelines set by the BPS (2011), I informed the participants of their right of withdrawal from the research. The participants were made aware that the withdrawal was only possible up to a date agreed with them verbally. This was due to the practical elements of needing to analyse the data.

#### 3.13.3 Anonymity Risk

In research it is essential that any data gathered be treated with respect. Participants were offered anonymity whilst expressing their thoughts and feelings with regard to the area of research. Wiles, Crow, Heath and Charles (2008) argue that anonymity underpins additional offerings of confidentiality. The nature of research is to offer the

findings to the field within which the research is situated; by definition this is the opposite of confidentiality. Wiles et al. (2008) in turn suggest that anonymisation alone does not do away with all of the difficulties that exist in this area.

Participants were made aware of their anonymised interview transcripts (see 3.13.4 *Data Protection*) being shared with colleagues.

During one of the interviews two disclosures were made. I followed the Child Protection (CP) procedures that were in place in the LA as well as the protocols in the school.

#### 3.13.4 Data Protection

The data collected during interview was recorded using a digital recording device. The audio data was stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). Once the audio was transcribed, all copies were destroyed.

#### 3.13.5 Relevance and the Impact of the Research

As this is exploratory research, it is difficult to ascertain the nature or direction of any findings. The impact and implications from the findings from this research are examined in chapter 5, *Discussion*. The limitations of the current study are also outlined. A more pertinent argument from Fox, Martin, and Green (2005) states that practitioner research should be designed to impact services and therefore impact service users.

As thanks to the school where the research was completed, I offered to return to discuss the findings and implications of the research. I offered to present an accessible version of the research to the whole school, staff and/or participants. It is my intention that the findings from this research are also disseminated through publication in a journal. Additionally, the research will be released as a public document into the UEL library and the British Library. I will also present this research at a conference hosted by UEL to TEPs, EPs, UEL and LA delegates. The LA, within which the research is being conducted, requires that research conducted be presented to EPs in that service at a

conference. In addition to this, paper copies of the research will be disseminated to the LA's Educational Psychology department.

### 3.14 *Chapter Summary*

In this chapter, I outlined the research question (3.2). I then spoke about the ontological and epistemological position of the research (3.3), including the nature of social constructionism and its relation to this research (3.3.2). Following this, I detailed the purpose of the research (3.4), as well as the use of IPA (3.5). After this, I described the research technique (3.6) and research design (3.6) as well as the use of a pilot interview (3.8). The characteristics of the research participants (3.9), pragmatics of the data collection (3.10), and data analysis (3.11) were then outlined. I highlighted other methodological assumptions such as validity (3.12) and ethical issues (3.13) followed by a summary of the chapter.

## Chapter 4: Analysis

### 4.1 *Chapter Overview*

In this chapter I will outline the process of analysis (4.2). I will present an analytic narrative of each participant individually (4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8). Each participant has a table of superordinate themes. The emergent themes discussed within each superordinate theme were the ones I felt to be most pertinent to participants' experiences. Next, I will give an overview of the themes that were common across the participants (4.9). I will conclude with summaries of my analysis (4.10) and the chapter (4.11).

### 4.2 *The Analytic Process*

Having completed the transcription for each individual participant (see Appendix P), I created the template through which the analysis would take place. Using this template (see Appendix R) I followed the procedure outlined by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009). The overall design for this template was given as a guide. I decided to include the original transcript, a section for exploratory comments, and a section for the emergent themes. This is because it is the natural progression of the analysis and shows how the themes exist within the interviews. Each analytic template has some text in an orange font and some text struck out. The orange text, in the following fashion (**text in orange**), were the additions made during the second visit of the emergent themes. Text that had a line through it, in this fashion (~~emergent themes~~), shows a theme that I felt was not necessarily representative of the interview or participants' experiences. Using post-it notes, I then placed the emergent themes together to develop superordinate themes that will be discussed below (see Appendix S). I showed my analysis to two different colleagues, both qualified main-grade EPs, who felt that my analysis was an accurate representation and interpretation of the participant.

I completed the analysis in the same chronological order as the interviews. I also speak in the first person throughout to make explicit my reflexive position throughout the analytic process. Where superordinate themes exist between participants, I have used the guidance from Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009), stipulating that themes need to



exist across a minimum of half of the participants to be considered a group superordinate theme. These are discussed in Table 6, in section 4.9.

In an attempt to keep the participants' language and experiences alive throughout the analytic process, I have used quotes to name the superordinate themes relevant to each participant. This is referred to as the pure superordinate theme. In order to be able to compare between participants, I have also given a name that considers the general area of discussion. I have referred to this as the prevalent superordinate theme. An example of this is Gillan Darmody's first superordinate theme: '*Coz it's there, like always on*' – *The wrap-around existence of the Internet* (see table 1).

### 4.3 *Participant 1 - Gillian Darmody*

Table 1: Superordinate themes evident in Gillian's interview.

<b>Gillian Darmody – Superordinate Themes</b>		
<b>Superordinate Theme Number</b>	<b>Pure Superordinate Theme</b>	<b>Prevalent Superordinate Theme</b>
<i>One (4.3.1)</i>	<i>Coz it's there, like always on'</i>	<i>The wrap-around existence of the Internet</i>
<i>Two (4.3.2)</i>	<i>You can talk to most people in the world</i>	<i>Connect to anyone in the world</i>
<i>Three (4.3.3)</i>	<i>I just come back to it whenever</i>	<i>The power to come back to it when I want</i>
<i>Four (4.3.4)</i>	<i>You can like express yourself more on social media</i>	<i>Self-expression in an efficient way</i>
<i>Five (4.3.5)</i>	<i>You can just delete it</i>	<i>Social media content edited as required</i>
<i>Six (4.3.6)</i>	<i>I guess it's lying really</i>	<i>Not everyone is who they say they are</i>
<i>Seven (4.3.7)</i>	<i>Twitter, Facebook, all of that</i>	<i>Social media lets me do what need to</i>
<i>Eight (4.3.8)</i>	<i>I'm just a user reading their tweets</i>	<i>Not all users are equal</i>
<i>Nine (4.3.9)</i>	<i>You're on your own, kind of</i>	<i>Sometimes you can be unnoticed</i>
<i>Ten (4.3.10)</i>	<i>It's more effective learning from someone who's actually there</i>	<i>Learning opportunities are available</i>

#### 4.3.1 Superordinate Theme One - Coz it's there, like always on

In this superordinate theme, SM appeared to be an omnipresent tool. It was reliable and seemed to exist permanently. Gillian declared:

*“Coz it's there. Like, always on”.*  
(-Gillian, line: 603)

Gillian also declared how much she may have come to rely on SM, when asked about what she would be doing if she were not using SM, she replied:

*“Just bein' bored”*  
(-Gillian, line: 325)

Gillian was explicit in her language when we discussed her use of SM. Twitter seemed to have a particularly significant place in her life given her description of her routine upon returning home from school. The seemingly nominal time-period of homework prior to the use of Twitter, indicative of a further element of reliance:

*“I usually get changed first, and then, I do some homework or something for like 5 minutes, and then go on Twitter”.*  
(-Gillian, lines: 161-162)

Gillian went on to add that her time spent on SM was born out of a sense of addiction.

*“But you just spend time there, like you're addicted to Twitter and stuff”.*  
(-Gillian, lines: 588-590)

Gillian's feelings of SM being an addictive entity are further explored in her description of the duration of her use:

*“Probably until I go to sleep”.*  
(-Gillian, lines: 175)

I feel Gillian's ostensible addiction to SM, namely Twitter, was connected to its omnipresence.

#### 4.3.2 Superordinate Theme Two - You can talk to most people in the world

Gillian seemed to be dissatisfied with the limitations of the people around her as a finite pool from where to select her friends. She mentioned:

*“In real life, you've only got the people around you that you can talk to, whereas on social media you can like talk to like most people in the world, like anywhere around the world”.*

(-Gillian, lines: 859-861)

She added a sense of becoming embroiled in their lives, wanting to learn more.

*“Like, you’re interested so you wanna keep reading”.*

(-Gillian, line: 287)

This could also be a contributing factor to her description of SM as addictive (see 4.3.1).

#### 4.3.3 Superordinate Theme Three - I just come back to it whenever

Further to Gillian’s feeling of reliance on SM, she appeared to have a degree of control over her ability to use SM when she chose. Gillian articulated:

*“It's on and I just come back to it whenever.”*

(-Gillian, line: 304)

I believe this showed a level of autonomy and control. Additionally, it uncovered recognition of the permanence of SM. Gillian was satisfied with coming back to SM as she wished because she knew it would be there.

#### 4.3.4 Superordinate Theme Four - You can like, express yourself more on social media

To aid Gillian’s ability to permeate the SM world as an unblemished user, Gillian seemed to take advantage of the efficiency on offer. Gillian mentioned:

*“You can like, express yourself more on social media”*

(-Gillian, line: 660)

She added that this was important because:

*“You're more likely to become friends with someone if like, you have things in common. And by seeing that, you can see if you have things in common or not.”*

(-Gillian, lines: 700-701)

It appears as though this was a possibility for her through the use of multimedia; photos and videos. It seems as though Gillian benefitted from the opportunity to give an

account of herself and offering the information she chose to offer in the way that she wanted.

*“Just photos that you post, and people can like, see your stuff and know things about you, things that you like and stuff”.*  
(-Gillian, lines: 671-672)

Gillian believed this sense of efficiency to be available online.

#### 4.3.5 Superordinate Theme Five - You can just delete it

Gillian described the opportunities to remove anything that she may disapprove as a feature of SM. She explained:

*“...and if like you do something on Twitter to embarrass yourself then you can just delete it. Whereas if you did something embarrassing in real-life, you can't like, (pauses) get rid of it”.*  
(-Gillian, lines: 832-834)

Here, Gillian's feelings of keeping her online integrity intact came to the fore. Gillian brought to light a feeling of a consequence-free existence on SM.

*“Me: Something you've done on Twitter, does that follow you around forever?  
Gillian: No”*  
(-Gillian, lines: 840-842)

I felt this was a type of brand protection. Gillian's language showed this was a two-fold concept, one element suggesting a necessity to appear to be someone to be associated with online, unblemished. This can be seen as a reactive response, as above. The second element being proactive, an opportunity to show herself in such a way that people can see her interests and qualities. Gillian suggested:

*“By liking pages or following someone or posting things, or by having things on your background, it like shows all your interests”.*  
(-Gillian, lines: 695-696)

Gillian's sense of SM can be described as one that allows users to manufacture their profiles to become the people they wish to be seen as.

#### 4.3.6 Superordinate Theme Six - I guess it's lying really

Gillian highlighted a concern that she had with regards to users on SM. She felt that some users were being dishonest. We spoke about how her friends would deliberately use their Facebook statuses to give conflicting messages.

*"I guess it's lying really"*  
(-Gillian, line: 492)

Gillian's description implied that users were being caught out.

*"Coz like on Facebook you can post your location, and like sometimes it says like, they can't do something, they're busy, and then they've posted, then they've gone out somewhere"*.  
(-Gillian, line: 486-488)

Alternatively, this could also be the result of users avoiding potentially difficult conversations face-to-face, opting to do so through SM. This was also the case when Gillian mentioned she encountered users who had made fake profiles, pretending to be other people. This seems distinctly different to embellishing or manipulating profile content to appear unblemished.

*"Coz sometimes people make like fake accounts or something, like, they're fake. They pretend they're someone else"*.  
(-Gillian, lines: 745-746)

#### 4.3.7 Superordinate Theme Seven - Twitter, Facebook, all of that

Gillian to some degree seemed to consider all SM to be the same.

*"Twitter, Facebook, all of that"*.  
(-Gillian, line: 38)

All the while, Gillian had identified the roles she picked out for the various different types of SM. Whilst talking about Facebook, she mentioned that she:

*"I only really go on it to check birthdays"*.  
(-Gillian, line: 83)

Gillian's overall understanding of why SM existed was communication.

#### 4.3.8 Superordinate Theme Eight - I'm just a user reading their tweets

Gillian also alluded to a notion of status that exists on SM. I feel her use of language indicated a dichotomy of users on SM, highlighted by way of opposing words such as them and us. This polarisation of users suggested a level of power, governed by how popular any given user is.

*"It's like, they're popular so they can do whatever, but I'm just a user reading their tweets. They've got like loads of followers all around the world and stuff, I've just got some. They're kinda like, more powerful".*

(-Gillian, lines: 390-392)

Gillian's expression suggested an expectation of users to follow rules that exist based on a user's perception of their role on SM.

*"They're trying to tell you stuff. So if you're following them, you read it".*

(-Gillian, lines: 242-243)

*"You've got to read everyone's tweets and that".*

(-Gillian: lines: 238)

It seems Gillian had a responsibility that she may very well have given herself.

#### 4.3.9 Superordinate Theme Nine – You're on your own, kind of

*"Then you're like on your own kind of".*

(-Gillian, line: 588)

Describing her interactions with popular posts or when her friends were in conversations where her comments were not as relevant.

*"I don't know. It's probably coz like they can't see you".*

(-Gillian, line: 828)

For all Gillian's opportunities to exhibit a confident and expressive person, it appears that she was still susceptible to becoming anonymous.

4.3.10 Superordinate Theme 10 - It's more effective learning from someone who's actually there

Gillian openly expressed her thoughts about the ideas of organic and effective learning opportunities as a by-product of SM:

*"It's more effective learning something from someone who's like actually there".*  
(-Gillian, lines: 773-774)

In reference to how she would be able to use SM to communicate with teachers in an attempt to improve lessons she suggested the opportunities that existed:

*"They'd find out more about you. And they might be able to change the lesson, to like, suit you".*  
(-Gillian, 954-956)



#### 4.4 Participant 2 - Margaret Thompson

Table 2: Superordinate themes evident in Margaret's interview.

<b>Margaret Thompson – Superordinate Themes</b>		
<b>Superordinate Theme Number</b>	<b>Pure Superordinate Theme</b>	<b>Prevalent Superordinate Theme</b>
<i>One (4.4.1)</i>	<i>I'm a lot more confident on social media</i>	<i>Social media breeds a sense of confidence</i>
<i>Two (4.4.2)</i>	<i>I check it everyday</i>	<i>Social media use is habitual</i>
<i>Three (4.4.3)</i>	<i>Saves time I guess</i>	<i>Social media is efficient</i>
<i>Four (4.4.4)</i>	<i>I don't actually know the reason it was created</i>	<i>I use it for what I need to</i>
<i>Five (4.4.5)</i>	<i>It's simple really, you do it and you fit in, or you don't and you don't</i>	<i>There is a need to fit in</i>
<i>Six (4.4.6)</i>	<i>That is out there</i>	<i>Social media is penetrative</i>
<i>Seven (4.4.7)</i>	<i>They'd probably still get bullied</i>	<i>Some people are vulnerable</i>
<i>Eight (4.4.8)</i>	<i>Nothing bad's happened</i>	<i>Bad things can happen</i>
<i>Nine (4.4.9)</i>	<i>I think there should be a parent control</i>	<i>Parents have a responsibility</i>
<i>Ten (4.4.10)</i>	<i>Unless you're following me you can't actually see anything</i>	<i>You can only see what I let you see</i>
<i>Eleven (4.4.11)</i>	<i>I don't necessarily follow them back</i>	<i>Anonymous people can be kept at bay</i>
<i>Twelve (4.4.12)</i>	<i>Speaking to people face-to-face is a lot safer than using social media</i>	<i>I feel safer speaking face-to-face</i>

#### 4.4.1 Superordinate Theme One - I'm a lot more confident on social media

Margaret was explicit about being more confident through SM.

*"I think I'm a lot more confident on social media"*

(-Margaret, lines: 805-806)

Earlier in the interview, Margaret alluded to opportunities that she felt were available to her on SM that could be factors that positively impact confidence, such as:

*"I'd plan what I was gonna say"*

(-Margaret, line 256)

Margaret added that she did not:

*"Feel comfortable enough or confident enough to actually go and speak to them face to face".*

(-Margaret, lines: 836-837)

This could be linked to an emotional, psychological, or physical sense of comfort.

#### 4.4.2 Superordinate Theme Two – I check it everyday

Margaret described SM as habitual.

*"I think it's more of a habit"*

(-Margaret, line: 160)

Margaret's routine means that there appears to be some reason to:

*"Check it everyday"*

(-Margaret, line: 151)

This may be the result of Margaret believing that SM:

*"Gives you, like, a better understanding of the world"*

(-Margaret, lines: 730-731)

It seems, as though whatever understanding she does develop, SM could well be a distraction for Margaret. Without SM Margaret felt she would:

*"Probably have more of an attention span to other things if I wasn't on there"*

(-Margaret, lines: 173-174)

#### 4.4.3 Superordinate Theme Three - Saves time I guess

Margaret suggested that she enjoyed a sense of efficiency offered by SM. She openly stated:

*“Saves time I guess”*  
(-Margaret, line 756)

Adding:

*“It's just more time, like, it takes more time to go out and ask someone or go and find someone that could help you. Whereas, it takes like five minutes to send them a message”*  
(-Margaret, lines 761-763)

Interestingly, she also implied a degree of predictability on offer through SM.

*“Say they've put, like, a status of, like, how angry they are. You'd ask them why they're angry whereas, if I, if you'd met them face to face you probably wouldn't like ask them or if you did you probably wouldn't get the answers that you were expecting to get”*  
(-Margaret, lines 881-884)

This level of efficiency and predictability perhaps contradicted the sense of safety that existed through face-to-face interactions, missing from SM interactions (see 4.4.12).

#### 4.4.4 Superordinate Theme Four - I don't actually know the reason it was created

It appears that Margaret's use of SM is driven by her own means. She mentioned:

*“I don't actually know the reason it was created”*  
(-Margaret, line: 604)

Margaret does appear to have identified the uses she has for the different SM sites that she uses:

*“Well, it's mainly like when it comes to like tweeting celebrities like if it's a birthday or something. Whereas on Facebook I mention like about my, like how my day's been or stuff's going on”.*  
(-Margaret, lines: 197-199)

The need to do this through SM is apparent. It became clear to me that Twitter fulfilled a role in her life that made it seemingly irreplaceable.

*“Whereas, Twitter, I can't really knock on a celebrity's door and ask how they're doing”*  
(-Margaret, lines: 294-295)

I feel that this identified role for SM certainly argues a strong case for SM becoming a tool much like any other that Margaret would use.

#### 4.4.5 Superordinate Theme Five - It's simple really, you do it and you fit in, or you don't and you don't

Margaret effectively articulated the changing rules that enable someone to fit in with the peers through SM. She suggested that there was an element of chance as to whether a person could be accepted, even if he/she had managed to do what was asked of him/her.

*“I think that they'd probably still get bullied...because they haven't followed through it or they haven't said, "Oh well, I'll do it then." It's simple really, you do it and you fit in, or you don't do it and you don't. But then sometimes, you can do it and still not fit in. It's like chance I guess”*  
(-Margaret, lines: 721-724)

She also discussed her experience of users being subtly coerced into using SM, and perhaps engaging with some of the illicit behaviours apparent in 4.4.7 (see lines 686-690). This need to fit in or belong with peers exists in the physical world but in the virtual world I sense that there is a wider plethora of groups and places where one needs to be seen to belong.

*“I think a few people go on social media or use social media because their friends do it and because their friends keep mentioning it and tell them, "Ah well you should get it," otherwise you can't be in, like, a group or something”*  
(-Margaret, lines: 700-702)

So much so, that Margaret also mentioned that her peers who had been bullied continued to use SM with alias profiles.

*“A few of my friends have had problems with people on, like, Facebook where they've been, like, harassed or people have sent them, like, loads of messages bullying them. So a few of my friends have made, like, different profiles”*  
(-Margaret, lines: 788-790)

The attraction and need to use SM is obviously so great in some cases that people are willing to continue to use SM even having had negative experiences.

#### 4.4.6 Superordinate Theme Six - That is out there

Margaret alluded to a degree of permanence and pervasiveness with SM, especially Facebook. She suggested that things could not be undone in the way that they may have in face-to-face interactions.

*“If you say something by accident on, like, social media you couldn't really apologise that is out there”*  
(-Margaret, lines 923-924)

That was an example of how behaviour can be immortalised through SM, but Margaret also suggested that SM itself seemed to have a pervasive quality that interrupted her ability to do other things.

*“Well, I probably, like read more books or read other things apart from people's statuses”*  
(-Margaret, lines 187-188)

Her language appeared to indicate a degree of pointlessness to some of the actions on SM. I felt that Margaret's view of SM being penetrative was linked to her belief of where she might be when she uses SM:

*“It could be anywhere”*  
(-Margaret, line 334)

I felt that this implied an omnipresence of SM, where Margaret connected at will.

#### 4.4.7 Superordinate Theme Seven - They'd probably still get bullied

Margaret mentioned bullying on a number of occasions. She suggested that some of her younger peers were perhaps more vulnerable because of their age.

*“I think if more people want to like go on it that are at a younger age and more bullying happens through it as well.”*  
(-Margaret, lines 708-709)

She added that this vulnerability might be compounded by a misinterpretation that could be a result of their naivety

*“Some might just think, "Oh, well, maybe this is supposed to happen...or maybe it's just a joke.”*  
(-Margaret, lines: 714-715)

It appears that Margaret suggested that some of her vulnerable peers might have, under some guise, engaged with something that has put them in a compromising position.

*“I think some, like, a few people my age have done it. They've sent pictures to people and they're not, like whatever, I think they might be explicit pictures. No-one has told me, but they could have done it. But they haven't done it, like, or said they did. Or, like, they said they done it. I don't know, coz like, maybe they're just saying that. I don't know”.*

(-Margaret, lines: 686-690)

There was some overlap between this area and (4.4.12), though this section pertains more to the safety/naivety of users more than the difference of speaking face-to-face versus over the Internet.

#### 4.4.8 Superordinate Theme Eight - Nothing bad's happened

Nevertheless, it appears that Margaret has yet to be the subject of such concerns. She mentioned that:

*“When I first got it mum said that I wasn't allowed to add anyone that I didn't know or anyone that she didn't know or that she hadn't heard of”*

(-Margaret, lines: 141-142)

Even if she were to have a negative experience, it seems that she feels she would be able to overcome her experience.

*“I think you can block them.”*

(-Margaret, line: 398)

However, it seems the reason she started to use and still continues to engage with SM is because of her initial experience.

*“It was good. I still use it now sometimes. Nothing bad's happened.”*

(-Margaret, line: 100)

#### 4.4.9 Superordinate Theme Nine - I think there should be a parent control

Margaret's narrative suggested a competent and accomplished SM user. Still, there was a discourse throughout our discussion of the need for an element of parental measures. Margaret wished to give parents the capacity to reprimand their children for bad behaviour, suggesting SM is a privilege in need of monitoring.

*“I think there should be a, like, a parent control or something on there. Like, I'm not sure where you're allowed to use it and you'd have to ask, like, your parents or something to go on there or it would just, like, log you out and not let you log back in”*  
(-Margaret, lines: 944-947)

However, she maintained that users should be prepared to step away from SM if they are having negative experiences. This contradiction of ideas, a privilege which people should be prepared to stop using if others are creating bad experiences for them, indicated her position of users having a level of emotional maturity to access/use SM.

*“Like, I think, like, if you know you're being bullied I think it would probably be best if you, like, just step away and was like, Oh I won't use that for a bit, and see whether it calms down”*  
(-Margaret, lines: 986-987)

Margaret spoke about the above in relation to staying safe online. I particularly found it interesting that there was a discussion of the need for an emotional maturity, whilst expecting parents to intervene and be moral/emotional compasses for users.

#### 4.4.10 Superordinate Theme 10 - Unless you're following me you can't actually see anything

Margaret showed SM prowess, indicating that users followed her, but:

*“I don't necessarily follow them back”.*  
(-Margaret, line: 403)

This suggested a sense of power. The following quote corroborates this narrative and adds an element of exclusivity.

*“Some of my Twitter profile's private so unless you're following me...you can't actually see anything”.*  
(-Margaret, lines: 407-308)

Margaret depicted a user who seems to be in control on SM.

#### 4.4.11 Superordinate Theme 11 - Speaking face-to-face is a lot safer than using social media

However, added to Margaret's discourse is a need for safety. Margaret felt:

*"Probably speaking to people face to face is a lot safer than using social media"*  
(-Margaret, line: 890)

This was linked to her feelings of bullying not being taken as seriously through SM.

*"When it comes to being, like, bullied, for instance, they will use, like, the Internet and, like, social media more than what they will actually saying it to someone's face because then they think they'll get into less trouble"*  
(-Margaret, lines: 621-624)

Above, Margaret showed some concern about SM use generally.

#### 4.4.12 Superordinate Theme 12 - I don't necessarily follow them back

Margaret seemed to suggest that she had a degree of control over other users on SM; this was expressed by the way she chose to interact with them.

*"Me: Okay, so you're happy to let whoever on Twitter follow you... Margaret: Yeah but I don't necessarily follow them back."*  
(-Margaret, lines 401-403)

This also seemed to be a facilitative mechanism for Margaret to help keep herself safe when using SM, perhaps linked to nothing bad happening (4.4.8).

*"Make sure my profile's, like, on private even if they can add me make sure none of my personal information's out there"*  
(-Margaret, lines 780-781)

This seems to suggest a power imbalance, where Margaret has the upper hand when added by others.



#### 4.5 John Smith

Table 3: Superordinate themes evident in John's interview.

<b>John Smith – Superordinate Themes</b>		
<b>Superordinate Theme Number</b>	<b>Pure Superordinate Theme</b>	<b>Prevalent Superordinate Theme</b>
<i>One (4.5.1)</i>	<i>You can talk instantly</i>	<i>Social media communication is instant</i>
<i>Two (4.5.2)</i>	<i>If you all press enter at the same time it's a bit confusing</i>	<i>Social media has impacted conversational etiquette</i>
<i>Three (4.5.3)</i>	<i>Oh, that looks interesting</i>	<i>Social media use is purpose driven</i>
<i>Four (4.5.4)</i>	<i>The real world can affect the virtual world</i>	<i>Social media and the real world are interactive</i>
<i>Five (4.5.5)</i>	<i>It's up-to-date</i>	<i>Social media is a source of information</i>
<i>Six (4.5.6)</i>	<i>I see social media as a hobby</i>	<i>Social media has its place</i>
<i>Seven (4.5.7)</i>	<i>Only about twenty minutes</i>	<i>Social media use has a routine</i>
<i>Eight (4.5.8)</i>	<i>I'll probably wait till 5 o'clock</i>	<i>Social media is ready when I am</i>
<i>Nine (4.5.9)</i>	<i>They've made their product more social</i>	<i>Companies become approachable</i>

#### 4.5.1 Superordinate Theme One - You can talk instantly

John's experience of SM focussed on his ability to communicate with others. This seems logical given John's elder brother lived away from home and SM is the main conduit for this communication.

*"With social media you can just almost sort of talk instantly"*  
(-John, line: 438)

John's comments seemed to imply a sense of connectedness amongst himself and his peers.

*"But the communication aspect of, like, using Facebook is just like I can talk to them to see how they're doing"*  
(-John, lines 456-458)

John's use of language suggested a two-fold aspect of communication: the ability to do so and the efficiency with which it happens.

#### 4.5.2 Superordinate Theme Two – If you all press enter at once it's a bit confusing

John expressed some concern about the efficacy of communication through SM, suggesting that there was a degree of confusion when all users pressed enter simultaneously.

*"If you communicate face-to-face in a group if you're saying something nobody else is talking but whereas in the group chat you could all be, like, write, if you all write once and, like, enter it, and press enter at once it's a bit confusing"*  
(-John, lines: 385-387)

John's comments suggested a lack of etiquette in the way SM allows users to engage in discussions with each other. However, as a positive notion, John seemed to suggest there was an element of clarity when communication was in text form, through SM.

*"One of my teachers is from (\_\_\_\_) and I sometimes don't understand what [they] say whereas say if it's on Facebook if someone has, like, an accent they've said the word and you can easily, sort of understand it"*  
(-John, lines: 581-583)

John articulated a difference between an instant message and a delayed message. Interestingly, both can be sent through SM, but they seem to serve different purposes.

*“Yeah instant message is more like, we'll have, like, short, quick messages. Like, normally they're maybe like two sentences but then if it's like a delayed one where I'll leave, like, maybe a five-sentence message and then come back in a few minutes, see if he's responded”*

(-John, lines: 148-150)

The delayed messaging could take a similar role to how we may traditionally view written communication: longer with an expectation of a delay in a reply. Instant message involves a short and quick conversation.

#### 4.5.3 Superordinate Theme Three - Oh, that looks interesting

When not using SM as a communicative tool, John seems to rely on SM as a news source or for other designated roles.

*“I'm a bit angry I'll play FarmVille because it's a stress reliever”*

(-John, lines: 232-233)

John stated that he uses SM for specific things. From John's descriptions it would seem that SM's purpose is to keep him entertained.

*“The only point would be to look at something on, like, a page, maybe like, "Oh that looks, that's interesting. I'll read some of that.”*

(-John, lines: 213-215)

#### 4.5.4 Superordinate Theme Four - The real world can affect the virtual world

John noticed an interaction between his real world and the virtual world he occupies on SM. He was explicit in his belief that

*“The real world can affect the virtual world”*

(-John, lines: 633-634)

However, John felt that there was enough of a distinction between the two that there was a feeling of invincibility on SM,

*“You can have an argument on Facebook, you're untouchable, they won't hit you, or they can't hit you”*

(-John, lines: 700-701)

...so much so, that there was an enhanced feeling of confidence.

*“Maybe you feel a bit more, courageous, I guess”*

(-John, line: 709)

I interpreted a curious element of interaction between the real world and virtual world, all the while there is an existence of a barrier allowing the same person to differ between environments.

#### 4.5.5 Superordinate Theme Five - It's up-to-date

Put simply, John felt there was a capacity within SM to keep him updated with the most recent events and he was able to share that with his peers.

*"It's definitely, it's sort of, it's like, it's up to date"*  
(-John, line: 296)

When I asked John why he felt that SM existed, he replied

*"To make spreading of information easier"*  
(-John, line: 504).

John felt as though it was his responsibility to complete this by sharing information with his peers.

*"I'd say, like, a lot of my friends can see that I'm, like, saving them time"*  
(-John, line: 563)

It was clear that John felt like he needed to share this up-to-date information with those around him, maybe to fulfil the purpose of SM or maybe to keep in line with his reason for using SM.

#### 4.5.6 Superordinate Theme Six - I see social media as a hobby

John's interactions with SM suggested that he was able to regulate his use as and when he needed to, describing it as a hobby.

*"I do sometimes see social media as, sort of, like, more of a hobby 'coz, by the way I use it"*  
(-John, line: 656-666)

So much so, when I asked John how he would respond if he had woken up one morning and SM was no longer available, John suggested:

*"I'd probably go buy some stamps"*  
(-John, line: 671)

John appears to have given SM a role in his life, but states that he is not reliant on it. This corroborates his application of SM as a hobby.

#### 4.5.7 Superordinate Theme Seven - Only about twenty minutes

Alongside SM having a designated place in John's routine, it has a seemingly nominal duration of use:

*"Only about twenty minutes, twenty to thirty minutes"*  
(-John, line: 118)

This is even though SM is the main form of contact for John and a particular group of friends from another country.

*"So I have these conversations with this friend and he'll sort of, like, tell the others"*  
(-John, line: 212)

John showed disciplined enough in his SM routine that he still limits it to a brief duration of use.

#### 4.5.8 Superordinate Theme Eight - I'll probably wait till 5 o'clock

John and I were discussing his use of SM on his own terms, when he was ready, a majority of the discussions having been with his brother. John said that:

*"After school probably. Like, I'll probably wait 'til about five o'clock to make sure he's, like, gotten home from, like, work"*  
(-John, line: 102)

John stated that he was ok to wait for his brother to get home. His language indicated, that SM existed and he would use it at his own leisure. He would be able to have any conversation he wanted at his own convenience.

#### 4.5.9 Superordinate Theme Nine - They've made their product more social

John and I discussed the use of advertising on SM. He appeared to understand the reasons behind advertising and seemed to carry a sense of openness to it.

*“Also, sometimes they collect data. So it's like market data as well for other companies they know, like, where to target their, like product”*  
(-John, lines: 517-519)

John's awareness of this area on SM was interesting, as he seemed to have a perspective that acknowledged the benefits for himself as a consumer.

*“They've made their product more social. So, like, they see that people, people like sort of phones that've got curved edges”*  
(-John, lines: 545-546)

John portrayed the idea that he as a consumer enjoyed companies taking feedback directly through SM.

#### 4.6 Nucky Thompson

Table 4: Superordinate themes evident in Nucky's interview.

<b>Nucky Thompson – Superordinate Themes</b>		
<b>Superordinate Theme Number</b>	<b>Pure Superordinate Theme</b>	<b>Prevalent Superordinate Theme</b>
<i>One (4.6.1)</i>	<i>But it's easier</i>	<i>Communication is made easier</i>
<i>Two (4.6.2)</i>	<i>They're like close friends of mine</i>	<i>Friends are a valuable resource</i>
<i>Three (4.6.3)</i>	<i>I would click like so they don't delete it</i>	<i>'Liking' means something</i>
<i>Four (4.6.4)</i>	<i>It makes me wanna meet more people</i>	<i>Wanting to meet more people</i>
<i>Five (4.6.5)</i>	<i>I try not to message people first</i>	<i>Adding others is a calculated decision</i>
<i>Six (4.6.6)</i>	<i>What the hell? You shouldn't be giving this person attention</i>	<i>People can use it to seek attention</i>
<i>Seven (4.6.7)</i>	<i>I can't be mean to them otherwise I'm the bitch</i>	<i>Responding to negative comments is hard</i>
<i>Eight (4.6.8)</i>	<i>Nothing can really stop me</i>	<i>Nothing can stop Facebook use</i>
<i>Nine (4.6.9)</i>	<i>I'm too busy with Facebook</i>	<i>Engaging with Facebook means not being left out</i>

#### 4.6.1 Superordinate Theme One – But it's easier

Nucky spoke openly about how she felt as though she had more confidence on Facebook.

*“Coz normally I gain more confidence when I message someone rather than just speaking to them in real life”*  
(-Nucky, lines: 178-180)

She attributed this to not actually talking to anyone, suggesting that this made it easier.

*“Yeah. Basically. But it's easier. Coz I'm not actually talking to them.”*  
(-Nucky, line: 191)

It seems as though SM requiring users to type allowed Nucky an ability to feel more ready to say what she would like to say.

#### 4.6.2 Superordinate Theme Two - They're close friends of mine

Given Nucky's confidence and ability to talk through SM, I felt her friends on SM were a valuable resource. When I asked about how she would feel if she was not able to use Facebook, Nucky indicated that:

*“I just wanna talk to people that I met on Facebook 'coz, they're like close friends of mine and I'll probably get sad 'coz they like, help me through a lot”*  
(-Nucky, lines: 331-332)

Nucky also seemed to have a high efficacy for her friendship, given that she felt as though

*“If I see someone and then they need help or something, coz they're sad, then I'll talk to them and help them”*  
(-Nucky, lines: 518-520)

I believed her friendships to be reciprocal given that she received and gave emotional support through them. These friendships are generated and maintained through SM.



#### 4.6.3 Superordinate Theme Three - I would click like so they didn't delete it

I feel that in addition to making friends, Nucky used other mechanisms to help validate other users on SM. The act of liking another user's post can stop him/her from deleting it. One outcome of this would be avoiding the feelings associated with having a post that no one liked.

*"If I saw something that I didn't really care about and no-one else clicked like, then I would click like so they didn't like delete it or feel sad"*

(-Nucky, lines: 256-257)

Nucky's demeanour during our conversation suggested to me that it was possible that she would feel sad and delete such a post; this action is her way of validating others. Additionally, liking other users' posts allows the two users to engage, potentially having positive psychological ramifications, or being levered to a friendship developing. Something that already has been seen to be important to Nucky.

*"Well, then they know that I like it. And we can talk about it. Or they just know that I've seen it. Even if we don't speak, it's like, like they know what that they did something and I saw it. And then they feel good, and I feel good"*

(-Nucky, lines: 246-248)

My interpretation of Nucky's experiences, imply that she takes measures to protect herself and other users emotionally.

#### 4.6.4 Superordinate Theme Four -- It makes me just wanna meet more people

It is clear that Nucky wished to engage with more/new people., having said so herself (see 4.6.2). She developed a close friend through Facebook. This encouraged Nucky to wish to communicate and connect with new people from around the world.

*"I like to have people from different countries. Like, I like to know people from across the world and stuff. So I just add them. And I've made like a really close friend from Facebook. So, yeah. It makes me just wanna meet more people, like him"*

(-Nucky, lines: 152-154)

Nucky was able to articulate the value of these friendships to her (see 4.6.2). It seems her experience of chatting to people has yielded positive encounters.

*"I'll go to someone on there like, my friend, and I'll talk to him and then he'll make me happy. So, normally, I guess, Facebook will make me happy"*

(-Nucky, lines: 278-279)

Given Nucky's beliefs that the users she engages with on Facebook make her happy, I felt it no surprise that she feels as though she wants:

*"Friends from across the world and to meet like different people"*  
(-Nucky, lines: 178)

If Nucky felt this strongly about meeting and speaking with people, then the next section should come as no surprise.

#### 4.6.5 Superordinate Theme Five - I try not to message people first

I feel that the following theme uncovers Nucky's mechanism for allowing herself to continue using SM and feeling good whilst doing so. I asked if she had added someone who she was then not able to talk to:

*"Um, not really. Well I did send a message to someone and they just ignored me. So, I was just sort of like...'coz they did like some of the pictures, that I have. So I thought they thought I was okay so I thought I'd message them first, but then, they didn't answer me, so I just, didn't wanna do it again"*  
(-Nucky, lines: 429-432)

I asked how this made her feel, Nucky explained that it was unpleasant enough to not want to experience it again.

*"Well, it's a shitty feeling. I didn't like it, but now I'm like, more careful about this stuff. So I try not to like message people first and stuff"*  
(-Nucky, lines: 436-438)

Nucky's experience of SM was that messaging other people first is a risky way to engage with others. Nonetheless, she added random people. Whilst Nucky believes this to be a random act, I felt it was a calculated decision.

*"Well. Yeah, coz like sometimes they put pictures on the group and then it just says add me. So I'll just click if I think they're cute"*  
(-Nucky, lines: 479-480)

Nucky's decision appears to be based on whether or not she felt the person who has requested to be added is cute. I believe she was referring to attractiveness. In line with comments Nucky's made earlier in the interview, it seems that being able to speak with good-looking people is a feature that she enjoyed.

*“Normally I only add good looking people, which is kinda mean. But, yeah. If I see someone and think OK, and I'll just add them and talk to them or they'll talk to me”*  
(-Nucky, lines: 397-398)

I believe this to be one of the ways in which Nucky validated herself.

#### 4.6.6 Superordinate Theme Six - What the hell? You shouldn't be giving this person attention

Nucky discussed her past and told me how she had to work through many difficulties to become the person she currently is. She added that she now feels strongly about people who use SM, especially Facebook, as an attention-seeking device.

*“I'll just look at it, and just think, what the hell. You shouldn't be giving this person attention, when that's all they want”*  
(-Nucky, lines: 660-662)

I asked if Facebook should be used to seek attention. Nucky replied:

*“No. Not unless they want, they need help”*  
(-Nucky, line: 650)

To me this implied that Nucky felt that Facebook could be used as a tool to seek help. It appeared that in the cases that Nucky experienced, as above, the users were seeking-attention for the wrong reasons and she did not approve of this.

#### 4.6.7 Superordinate Theme Seven - I can't be mean to them otherwise I'm the bitch

I felt Nucky's use of SM appeared to be somewhat perturbed. She said that she had been the subject of inappropriate advances from older men.

*“I've been bothered a few times actually, by older men. They've kept saying they love me and stuff. It's just really creepy. I blocked one, because (disclosure made)”*  
(-Nucky, lines: 705-707)

Initially, Nucky's response seems appropriate and she suggested earlier in the interview that she would block people with whom she did not wish to speak.

*“I block them. 'coz I think they deserve that”*  
(-Nucky, line: 454)

...which continues to be the appropriate response. However, when I asked why she would add such people to speak with in the first place she claimed:

*“I don't know - They've asked to be added and it's rude otherwise. Init. I can't be mean to them. Otherwise, then I'm the bitch. And, I'm not. I'm a good person”*  
(-Nucky, lines: 127-128)

I understand this to show that Nucky is driven to engage with anyone who makes a request to do so because she feels it is rude to do so otherwise. I saw this as a drive to be seen as a good person, I feel that it has made her susceptible and vulnerable to such negative experiences. Nucky has her own anxieties around SM use:

*“Well, normally. You know when someone is a fake when they have like images that just looks like it's off Google or something. Yeah - and most of the time they try to get you to send naked pictures and stuff. (pauses, looked like she was about to speak once more but stops herself)”*  
(-Nucky, lines: 93-96)

It seemed Nucky initially responded appropriately, however, when she feels that she will be perceived as a bitch, or a bad person she appears to put herself in danger again.

*“I told my mum, as well. And she was just like, I'm getting the police. And I didn't want her to over-react. So, I just don't tell her anymore”*  
(Nucky, lines: 708-710)

My interpretation of Nucky's actions are a necessity to be seen as a good person by those who can see her online. One impact of this is that it appears to cloud her judgement and make it difficult for her to make the correct choices.

#### 4.6.8 Superordinate Theme Eight - Nothing can really stop me

Nucky conceded she use Facebook at will:

*“Nothing can really stop me from going on it”*  
(-Nucky, lines: 305)

One of the physical restrictions that stops Nucky from being able to access Facebook is when her Internet runs out (a reference to her data allowance). At these times, it seems she can be forceful with her mother to ensure that she is able to connect to Facebook at will.

*“Nucky: um, not really. Apart from when I don’t have Internet. Like, my Internet runs out then I just can’t go on it, coz it’s run out.*

*Me: What happens then? How do you feel?*

*Nucky: Sad. And, I normally have a go at my mum and then make her get me more Internet”*

(-Nucky, lines: 316-321)

Alternatively, Nucky also made sure that there were other opportunities to connect, such as at a friend’s house.

*“Or, I’ll just go around my friend’s and use her Wi-Fi”*

(-Nucky, lines: 326-327)

When probed as to why it was so important that she was able to connect to Facebook, Nucky suggested it was the roles her Facebook friends had. She felt:

*“Just like what a normal friend would do. Comfort you and stuff, when you’re really sad and just, wanna, cry. And, they’re just there and they make you happy. So like, without them, you just feel so horrible and lonely and stuff. That’s normally what I feel like when I’m at home and, and I can’t use Facebook”*

(-Nucky, lines: 336-339)

Nucky’s experiences of Facebook enticed engagement with friends who helped her to feel good. It seemed clear to me that there is a degree of psychological and emotional difficulty when she is not able connect. This is evidenced through her desire to use/not-use Facebook at her own will, rather than as a result of things out of her control.

#### 4.6.9 Superordinate Theme Nine - I’m too busy with Facebook

Nucky’s use of Facebook indicated to me a pervasiveness that interrupted other areas of her social life.

*“I don’t go out with my friends as much, now, because I’m too busy with homework, Facebook”*

(-Nucky, lines: 507-509)

Her routine seemed focussed around the use of Facebook. When I asked, Nucky stated that:

*“I just use it ALL the time. Everyday. All day. There is probably nothing else that I do. When I get home, just Facebook”*

(-Nucky, lines: 75-77)

Later in the interview, I was able to understand better why Nucky seemed to invest so much time with Facebook. I felt that she used Facebook to fit in. Nucky's initial invitation to the world of SM was based on not wanting to feel left out.

*“Well, I heard that everyone was using it and I started to feel like I was left out. Like, they're all talking and stuff and what about me? So my friends like, they made me an email. I was like at their house and then I just went home and made a Facebook account because they, everyone else was doing it at that age, so I just felt like I wanted to do it.”*  
(-Nucky, lines: 269-272)

My interpretation of Nucky being busy with Facebook is that it is her way of ensuring that she does not get left out.

#### 4.7 Mickey Doyle

Table 5: Superordinate themes evident in Mickey's interview.

<b>Mickey Doyle – Superordinate Themes</b>		
<b>Superordinate Theme Number</b>	<b>Pure Superordinate Theme</b>	<b>Prevalent Superordinate Theme</b>
<i>One (4.7.1)</i>	<i>If I don't care why put it on there?</i>	<i>Social media is a tool</i>
<i>Two (4.7.2)</i>	<i>They're not actually there, it's a computer screen</i>	<i>Difficult to connect because of the medium</i>
<i>Three (4.7.3)</i>	<i>If you don't know 'em, then you don't meet</i>	<i>Safety first</i>
<i>Four (4.7.4)</i>	<i>Twitter's basically the same as Facebook</i>	<i>Social media is all the same</i>
<i>Five (4.7.5)</i>	<i>I don't go on it now because it's boring</i>	<i>The users make it what it is</i>
<i>Six (4.7.6)</i>	<i>I get my iPod out, I go on Facebook</i>	<i>The wrap-around existence of the Internet</i>
<i>Seven (4.7.7)</i>	<i>Get as many 'likes' as you want</i>	<i>'Liking' can be meaningful</i>

#### 4.7.1 Superordinate Theme One - If I don't care why put it on there?

Mickey's SM use predominantly seemed to be a way of him explaining to his friends the things he cares about.

*"If I don't care why put it on there?"*  
(-Mickey, line: 175)

And to arrange to meet his friends:

*"If you were on Facebook, and you hadn't seen somebody in six or seven weeks and I text them on Facebook, 'Do you want to meet up?'"*  
(-Mickey, lines: 488-490)

Or as a way to cope with boredom:

*"It's fun. I can play games anywhere, like, round my uncle's, but if I go round my uncle's and I'm bored, I'm like, 'I'm bored, I'm bored. What should I do? What should I do?' I get my iPod out from my whatever. I go on Facebook and play some games on Facebook"*  
(-Mickey, lines: 561-564)

Given the discussion that I had with Mickey I feel that SM, namely Facebook, serves a specific purpose to him.

#### 4.7.2 Superordinate Theme Two - They're not actually there it's a computer screen

An interesting area that Mickey and I were able to have a discussion about was his feelings regarding talking to a computer screen.

*"If you are facing the computer screen it looks like they're not there, actually not there. You're just typing on the computer screen. Okay. If you phone 'em then they're actually there, listening to you on the phone"*  
(-Mickey, lines: 447-450)

I interpreted Mickey's language to indicate that there was an element of communication that was important, that did not exist through SM.

*"It's just loads of stuff on Facebook. If you phone 'em, you can hear their voice and that's really important"*  
(-Mickey, lines: 402-403)

I found it difficult to understand the reason Mickey felt so strongly about needing to hear a person's voice. It was later in the conversation when he was able to talk about



times when his peers had appeared to ignore him that it became apparent to me why it was so important to him.

*“I go away from the computer, five minutes or something to go get a drink or check on my dinner. The next thing, when I come back I’ve, uhh [pause] pressed the little “x”. Where we comment. You have an “x” that’s written out and just ignored me after that”*  
(-Mickey, lines: 843-847)

The above quote, in the context of the two quotes that preceded it, indicates that knowing the other person received your communication and is socially obligated to respond immediately is potentially the reason Mickey feels it is important/beneficial to communicate directly rather than through SM. Though this is my hypothesis and was not explored explicitly with Mickey.

#### 4.7.3 Superordinate Theme Three – If you don’t know ‘em then you don’t meet

Mickey’s experience of SM also circles around the need to stay safe and avoid bullies.

*“If you don’t know ‘em, if this is a random stranger then you don’t meet him”*  
(-Mickey, line: 728)

Safety was not necessarily an overriding concern for Mickey, I feel it was important given that he mentioned it.

#### 4.7.4 Superordinate Theme Four - Twitter’s basically the same as Facebook

Mickey’s understanding of Facebook and Twitter is that they essentially were the same thing. This is evident through the following quote:

*“Twitter’s basically the same thing as Facebook”*  
(-Mickey, line: 511)

When prompted, he suggested that he would sometimes use them in the same way:

*“Me: Okay. So do you use it in the same way?  
Mickey: Sometimes, yeah”*  
(-Mickey, lines: 518-520)

Interestingly, Mickey later suggested that there were mechanisms that existed on Facebook that were not apparent on Twitter.

*“But pictures are only on there you can't comment on. Like if you put a picture on and you can comment on your own picture”*  
(-Mickey, lines: 524-525)

I feel that that Mickey's conceptualisation of Twitter was that it effectively served the same purpose, in different ways. Mickey also referred to Twitter as useless for the above-reason.

#### 4.7.5 Superordinate Theme Five - I don't go on it now because it's so boring

In line with Mickey's idea of SM having a role, it seems that he also felt the users had a role.

*“I used to go on Facebook but I've left Facebook. I am still on Facebook but I don't go on it now because it's so boring.”*  
(-Mickey, lines: 568-571)

Mickey's use of Facebook declined through boredom; his description of what made Facebook interesting was the users and the content that they share.

*“People just sitting down, eating their dinner, and taking pictures of them. And stick 'em on Facebook. If you go away and, like, if you, your wife, and your children, if you have any, go away and have a meal which looks really nice, you can take picture of it and stick it on Facebook. If your meal doesn't look, like, nice, don't stick it Facebook or Twitter”*  
(-Mickey, lines: 583-587)

It seems apparent from the above quotes, that for Mickey, it was the users role to make Facebook interesting.

#### 4.7.6 Superordinate Theme Six - I get my iPod out, I go on Facebook

Mickey felt that there was an element of SM that was accessible when he needed to use it.

*“I'm bored, I'm bored. What should I do? What should I do?” I get my iPod out from my whatever. I go on Facebook”*  
(-Mickey, line: 562-563)

Mickey showed propensity to play games on Facebook when he became bored. This is interesting given that Mickey stated that Facebook itself had become boring. This

unbridled accessibility was a feature that Mickey took advantage of. However, he did profess some concern for users with access issues.

*“Yeah, what happens if my mum or your mum or whatever is paralysed and can't see? How do they know what they're doing on Facebook?”*  
(-Mickey, lines: 634-635)

It is not clear if there are mechanisms for people with access difficulties, but Mickey made his thoughts clear, that it would be unfair for these users.

#### 4.7.7 Superordinate Theme Seven - Get as many ‘likes’ as you want

I found it difficult to ascertain Mickey’s position as to how he felt about likes and liking on Facebook. I believe them to share a certain value with comments for Mickey. He initially suggested that:

*“Yeah I like it when people to comment on it. It makes me feel good like, they talk to me like that”*  
(-Mickey, likes: 166-167)

And:

*“If you "like" a comment you go down and it says "like" or "dislike". If you click on "like" you get more "likes" than anyone else”*  
(-Mickey, likes: 225-226)

At this point I felt that Mickey seemed to value and desire likes. However, later when we were discussing likes in more detail, Mickey stated:

*“Me: Okay. And does it mean something to you?  
Mickey: No, it doesn't mean nothing”*  
(-Mickey, lines: 278-280)

I feel that Mickey’s relationship with likes were similar to his position with regard to communicating. My hypothesis is that for Mickey, the real value of likes exists within other’s ability to see and interact with the overall process.

*“No, I don't have to "like" it that's for people to do and all that”*  
(-Mickey, line: 246)

Mickey felt no obligation to like a post on Facebook, suggesting that it was an overall communal act.

#### 4.8 *Chalky White*

Table 6: Superordinate themes evident in Chalky's interview.

<b>Chalky White – Superordinate Themes</b>		
<b>Superordinate Theme Number</b>	<b>Pure Superordinate Theme</b>	<b>Prevalent Superordinate Theme</b>
<i>One (4.8.1)</i>	<i>If no-one knows anything you kinda stop existing</i>	<i>The ability to exist permanently makes it a necessity</i>
<i>Two (4.8.2)</i>	<i>People only use it because their friends use it</i>	<i>Facebook can create a sense of reliance</i>
<i>Three (4.8.3)</i>	<i>I just use it for the funny pictures</i>	<i>Social media serves a purpose</i>
<i>Four (4.8.4)</i>	<i>Usually it's something you can relate to</i>	<i>'Liking' means something</i>
<i>Five (4.8.5)</i>	<i>I get to see it instantly</i>	<i>Communication becomes instant</i>
<i>Six (4.8.6)</i>	<i>Find out information in a more efficient way</i>	<i>Communication is efficient</i>
<i>Seven (4.8.7)</i>	<i>It may make you feel more confident</i>	<i>Social media creates a feeling of confidence</i>
<i>Eight (4.8.8)</i>	<i>I feel as if I can't trust everything I see</i>	<i>Social media creates scepticism</i>
<i>Nine (4.8.9)</i>	<i>It almost distorts what a social community normally is</i>	<i>The permanence of content can distort interactions</i>
<i>Ten (4.8.10)</i>	<i>You couldn't say 'I don't want you on Facebook'</i>	<i>It can be difficult to say no</i>
<i>Eleven (4.8.11)</i>	<i>My social life and my family life are different</i>	<i>It is possible to be different online</i>

#### 4.8.1 Superordinate Theme One – If no one knows anything you kinda stop existing

How did Chalky make sense of the reason that people posted to Facebook? We discussed the idea of people using Facebook to stay connected and stay in the loop, even when away.

*“I guess maybe they feel like they’re missing out, I definitely do. If people are on holiday then they feel as though they can’t be related back to home without social media, I think. It’s funny in a way, because they’re actually out, but they still wanna be connected to the same people”*

(-Chalky, lines: 347-350)

I saw Chalky’s comments as indicative of people probably having more of a need to use Facebook when they were on holiday compared to at home.

*“Well they’re like out of the loop if they’re not constantly checking what other people are doing or doing something themselves. It’s like they’re living their life through social media. I guess it’s that social pressure thing again. You need to be telling everyone everything or nobody will know anything and you kinda stop existing”*

(-Chalky, lines: 360-364)

It came as no surprise to me that Facebook is the medium of choice above texting and other forms of connection. Chalky said about the use of Facebook:

*“I think it’s a lot less direct. To text someone you have to obviously choose the person. You have to say, this is directly to you. Facebook it could be a picture and you could just be another one of those people, maybe like someone else’s picture of themselves or something”*

(-Chalky, lines: 565-568)

The content that needs to be broadcast can go to everyone simultaneously, without prejudice. Chalky and his friends can make sure that they continue existing.

#### 4.8.2 Superordinate Theme Two - People only use it because their friends use it

I mention later how Chalky enjoyed using SM (4.8.3). Chalky seemed to hold this position because of his belief that his use was not born from dependence.

*“I don’t depend on Facebook”*

(-Chalky, line: 835)

Chalky felt that many of the people who do use SM seemed to do so because of a subtle or passive peer-pressure.

*“I think maybe friends only use it because their friends use it and people say, a lot of people come to you saying, "Can I add you on Facebook?" and if you say, "I haven't got a Facebook" it's a bit like, okay, and kills the conversation sometimes. Having a Facebook is much easier than maybe not having one when you're face-to-face”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 550-554)

For users who engaged with SM for these reasons, Chalky highlighted the possibility of them building an element of dependence. He added that this could have a psychological impact:

*“If someone did depend on Facebook? Then yeah. I think they would find it very stressful”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 839-840)

Chalky made a distinction between SM users.

*“I think there are different types of users. Some people strictly use Facebook just 'cause it's a good way to keep in touch with, maybe, old friends. Other people, it's constant posting, constant updating their life”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 354-356)

Chalky's experience of SM seems to indicate a spectrum of psychological impact of SM use ranging from enjoyment to stress. This seems to be dependent on the reasons people have chosen and continue to use SM.

#### 4.8.3 Superordinate Theme Three - I just use it for the funny pictures

When Chalky chooses to use Facebook, it is apparent that he has a specific use for it. We discussed various different uses that Chalky's friends had for Facebook, to which Chalky replied:

*“I don't really use it in that way. No. Um, I just, I don't really post many things. My primary image is from a couple years ago. I don't update it a lot like that. I don't mind it. I just use it mainly for the funny photos or interesting comments”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 680-682)

It is clear to me that this specific role that Facebook has in Chalky's life manages to meet a need that other things would not be able to give him access to.

*“I enjoy using social media. It shows new things that I wouldn't have found out without it”*  
(-Chalky, line: 293)

Additionally, Chalky describes the added benefit of being able to make arrangements with his peers whilst looking at the aforementioned funny pictures.

*“Click on their profile, send a message. Usually it's to do with if I want to go to the cinema with a friend”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 136-137)

#### 4.8.4 Superordinate Theme Four - Usually it's something you can relate to

Chalky and I discussed the act of liking on Facebook. Chalky indicated that:

*“Well, "liking" something could be, usually it's something you relate to or something you find funny or maybe it's just because you think it, well, any reason really”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 201-202)

As we discussed this idea further, it became apparent that there seems to be an element of politics surrounding the act of liking posts.

*“But you might not "like" something because of, it might be someone who you may not like that's posted it, someone you may dislike and so you're not going to "like" it 'cause you don't agree with them”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 202-205)

Initially, Chalky alluded to when he may not like something on Facebook. He suggested that a reason would be based on not liking the person, regardless of Chalky's thoughts about the Facebook content. Another reason Chalky gave for not liking content was:

*“Well, if you like something it comes up on their feed and maybe anyone else's feed and so people might get the wrong idea if you, if you "like" this then people may think you're involved with them more than you actually are”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 219-221)

Chalky showed concerned that any content that he might like would lead his Facebook friends to perhaps get the wrong impression about his relationships with his Facebook friends.

#### 4.8.5 Superordinate Theme Five - I get to see it instantly

A feature of SM that Chalky and I discussed was the speed with which communication could reach him. The content would usually be his friends' activity.

*“It could be anything. Usually it's just something someone has posted and a friend of mine has liked it and so it comes on, what I, my feed, what I can see and so I get to see it instantly”*

(-Chalky, lines: 99-101)

Even when Chalky would be browsing non-SM sites he would:

*“Check my Facebook every few minutes”*

(-Chalky, line: 373)

When asked about it, Chalky said:

*“‘Cause things are constantly happening. There'll be, constantly someone will be posting a new thing, "liking" a new picture which gets relayed back to me which I enjoy looking at”*

(-Chalky, line: 379-381)

I imagine Chalky's experience of SM being a stream of endorsed content aimed at trying to strike a chord with Chalky.

#### 4.8.6 Superordinate Theme Six - Find out information in a more efficient way

Chalky outlined his view of why Facebook exists. He discussed the idea of speed (see 4.8.5), here he appears to focus more on the efficiency with which this information can be exchanged.

*“The purpose is to just still be able to interact with other people, find out, maybe, information in a more efficient way”*

(-Chalky, lines: 521-522)

Chalky adds that Facebook's purpose is to allow communication to be exchanged efficiently, and that is one of the ways that he and his peers use it.

*“If you wanted to tell them something it'll be maybe a half an hour trip, just go, tell 'em something, and leave. That's obviously a long amount of time for such a small thing. Otherwise on a social media site you, it'll be there. If they see it it'll take a couple of seconds for them to know what's happening. Efficient, yeah”*

(-Chalky, lines: 532-536)

As our discussion progressed it became clear that Chalky was indicating that Facebook is not only making the communication more efficient but also penetrating the real-world interactions that these friends are having.



*“I might say, "Oh, did you see that picture" 'coz there's viral pictures, viral videos and they can be fun face to face talking about those”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 615-616)

Facebook transmits content quickly and efficiently enough to for the content to become the topic of discussion in face-to-face interactions. I discuss this element of Chalky’s experience in more detail later (see 4.8.9).

#### 4.8.7 Superordinate Theme Seven - It may make you feel more confident

Chalky and I discussed the idea of making sure that everyone could see everything, he suggested:

*“If you're showing everyone else it may make you feel more confident, I guess. It could maybe make you feel more popular”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 794-795)

Chalky was explicit that SM may make him feel more confident. Additionally, he might also feel popular. I found it really interesting that Chalky had earlier mentioned that:

*“It could mean they get to go to stuff like parties or meet up with people they might not actually be able to talk to in, maybe, real life”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 176-177)

One result of this new-found popularity and confidence is that, Chalky and friends can choose to associate with the friends they choose to. This is would be in place of the ones they may have to as a result of their limited confidence and popularity. But are these favoured friends, who they’ve made on SM, good friends?

*“Friends. Well, thing is on a place like Facebook, "friend" is just someone you've, well, just sent in a request to and they've accepted it. You have real friends but also they'll be people you may have met and added, had a five-minute chat with on a holiday or a friend of a friend you may just add so it's pretty wide what the "friend" is on Facebook”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 122-126)

Chalky’s language spoke volumes to me here; a friend is someone who has just been sent a request. A friend on Facebook is a more panoramic term than it might be in real-life. I feel that this is what Chalky was referring to when he spoke about more popular. Chalky appeared to be describing Facebook as a place not where one has more friends; but a place with a larger cohort of people who can see you exist.

#### 4.8.8 Superordinate Theme Eight - I feel as if I can't trust everything I see

Given Chalky and his peers can tell each other whatever they want or need to in such a fast and efficient manner, what are they actually telling each other? Chalky's experience shows that it is not necessarily the truth.

*"Oh, I think a lot of people nowadays are almost pressured socially. They're very in depth in social life and so they try to make the most out of it by using things like Facebook to make 'em seem like more than they maybe are"*  
(-Chalky, lines: 170-172)

Chalky explained that his peers were pressured in to being seen as something they're not. People go to lengths to ensure that their version of them on Facebook is:

*"In a place like Facebook you let people see what you want them to see."*  
(-Chalky, line: 159)

We went on to discuss what this presentation on Facebook meant. Chalky believed that his Facebook friends were not honest.

*"Yeah, I think people are very dishonest about who they are on Facebook. Because maybe they're not, kind of, proud of who they are in real life and so they try and act like more than they actually are 'coz everyone's always trying to be popular and everyone likes people liking them"*  
(-Chalky, lines: 656-658)

And how did this make Chalky feel?

*"Well I feel as if I can't, like, trust everything I see."*  
(-Chalky, line: 807)

I was perplexed as to why Chalky engaged with Facebook. Why would he still be engaging with Facebook? Irrespective of being able to trust the content, Chalky had earlier proclaimed:

*"Yeah, I guess it is a popularity contest. A lot of people do almost compete about how many friends they have on Facebook, which I find is quite funny. More friends on Facebook means you're more popular. That's what a lot of people think and so they compete with that because everyone's trying to get more popular in Facebook, real life"*  
(-Chalky, lines: 672-676)

Facebook and real-life had become appear too synonymous to be able to not engage. Chalky is simultaneously putting up with the dishonesty to continue to exist within the circles of friends he has away from Facebook.

4.8.9 Superordinate Theme Nine - It almost distorts what a social community normally is

Chalky iterated his point well. I found it difficult to understand what I felt he was saying.

*“Well, you may not be there but because you've posted something earlier then that gives someone else a chance who may not have been on it earlier to then see it. So you may have post something in the morning and then only halfway through the day someone may notice and they even change their perception of you throughout the day”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 242-245)

Initially I could not understand this difference between people hearing something about a person and reading something about a person, causing them to change their perception of the said person.

*“But because if you post it online and someone else has, kind of, seen it later, it kinda, almost distorts what, soc, like, what it's like to be in a social community normally is, and I just don't find it, like, normal”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 277-280)

Linking these two comments together, it became clearer that Chalky was referring to the permanence of content on profiles.

*“The way someone's seeing something they don't want them to see. They can't control who sees what as much as maybe they would. Like, you can say, "I want this person to see this," but when it comes down to it anyone can come online and see what you've done”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 845-848)

I then realised the difference was that people can go searching through your own approved content or content that exists about you on SM any point. I believe Chalky was saying that he does not feel that it is normal that, at will, others can find out so much about each other upon which they base their perceptions and opinions.

4.8.10 Superordinate Theme 10 - You can't say 'I don't want you on Facebook'

Chalky expressed a view of Facebook that indicated that there is a lack of personal space available. I interpreted Chalky as expressing the idea that you could not say no to adding someone on Facebook.

*“It can be a bad thing. You may, there may be someone you might be trying to avoid but have on Facebook because you can't say, “I don't want you on Facebook” or something like that. Yeah, because it can be a bit insulting”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 750-752)

It is not a comfortable position to say no. Chalky made an interesting point about people changing over time. Given Chalky's views on the permanence of content, it is entirely appropriate that he does not wish to have old friends discussing his two-years-ago self.

*“I guess, it's as if that person's intruding on, well, maybe my, newer life because people change over time. Obviously my two-years-ago self is the one he knows and maybe bring up things he may not want to be brought up in like nowadays social life”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 763-766)

As we discussed the idea more, it became clear that Chalky was in favour of only adding a particular type of friend/peer on Facebook. This was in relation to the way in which he might know them and the perception that they had of him.

*“I don't think it's a good thing. ‘Coz you have one Facebook profile but you may act differently in front of a lot of different people, in front of a person you may be aiming to work for or your teacher or your parents or your friends. But any of them could be looking at one Facebook profile and it's kind of hard to differentiate everything you do on there to each person you want looking at you. So I find it quite annoying the way it works like that”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 826-831)

Chalky seemed to be talking about needing to differentiate the content of his Facebook profile because of who might see. Chalky just found it easier to not add his parents.

#### 4.8.11 Superordinate Theme 11 - My social life and my family life are different

If Facebook and the real world are so intertwined in Chalky's experience, how can he keep his social life and his family life separate? Well, Chalky implied that he is a different person with his family than he is with his friends.

*“No, it's just too much, I guess, coming to my parents because I think my social life and my family life are two different things”*  
(-Chalky, lines: 441-442)

Chalky is striving to be independent of his parents and his family. I asked if he would use Facebook differently if someone were in the room with him:

*“Yeah, actually. I think I would. I might use it slightly differently”*  
(-Chalky, line: 490)

His response showed that he does not wish to be defined by the people around him. My hypothesis is that Chalky is using Facebook to be different; he is using it to be who he wishes to be. He is engaging with Facebook on the basis of the fact that it allows him to be who he is with his friends, not who he is with his family. Chalky can therefore be the person he is with his friends from the comfort of his bedroom.

#### 4.9 Analysis of Themes Across Participants

Table 7: A table showing the common themes across participants.

<b>Common Themes Across Participants</b>					
<b>Section</b>	<b>Group Superordinate Theme</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Pure Superordinate Theme</b>	<b>Prevalent Superordinate Theme</b>	<b>Section</b>
4.9.1	<i>One - Being confident and expressing yourself</i>	<i>Gillian Darmody</i>	<i>You can like express yourself more on social media</i>	<i>Self-expression in an efficient way</i>	4.3.4
		<i>Margaret Thompson</i>	<i>I'm a lot more confident on social media</i>	<i>Social media breeds a sense of confidence</i>	4.4.1
		<i>Nucky Thompson</i>	<i>But it's easier</i>	<i>Communication is made easier</i>	4.6.1
		<i>Mickey Doyle</i>	<i>If I don't care why put it on there?</i>	<i>Social media is a tool</i>	4.7.1
		<i>Chalky White</i>	<i>It may make you feel more confident</i>	<i>Social media creates a feeling of confidence</i>	4.8.7
4.9.2	<i>Two - Loneliness, being ignored/unseen</i>	<i>Gillian Darmody</i>	<i>You're on your own, kind of</i>	<i>Sometimes you can be unnoticed</i>	4.3.9
		<i>John Smith</i>	<i>If you all press enter at the same time it's a bit confusing</i>	<i>Social media has impacted conversational etiquette</i>	4.5.2
		<i>Nucky Thompson</i>	<i>I try not to message people first</i>	<i>Adding others is a calculated decision</i>	4.6.5
4.9.3	<i>Three - Control to use social media at will</i>	<i>Gillian Darmody</i>	<i>I just come back to it whenever</i>	<i>The power to come back to it when I want</i>	4.3.3
		<i>John Smith</i>	<i>I'll probably wait till 5 o'clock</i>	<i>Social media is ready when I am</i>	4.5.8
		<i>Nucky Thompson</i>	<i>Nothing can really stop me</i>	<i>Nothing can stop Facebook use</i>	4.6.8

4.9.4	Four - Role and status of social media users	Gillian Darmody	<i>I'm just a user reading their tweets</i>	<i>Not all users are equal</i>	4.3.8
		Margaret Thompson	<i>Unless you're following me you can't actually see anything</i>	<i>You can only see what I let you see</i>	4.4.9
		Mickey Doyle	<i>I don't go on it now because it's so boring</i>	<i>The users make it what it is</i>	4.7.5
4.9.5	Five - Identified roles for social media	Gillian Darmody	<i>Twitter, Facebook, all of that</i>	<i>Social media lets me do what I need to</i>	4.3.7
		Margaret Thompson	<i>I don't actually know the reason it was created</i>	<i>I use it for what I need to</i>	4.4.4
		John Smith	<i>Oh, that looks interesting</i>	<i>Social media use is purpose driven</i>	4.5.3
		Mickey Doyle	<i>Twitter's basically the same as Facebook</i>	<i>Social media is all the same</i>	4.7.4
		Chalky White	<i>I just use it for the funny pictures</i>	<i>Social media serves a purpose</i>	4.8.3
4.9.6	Six - Habit and routines	Margaret Thompson	<i>I check it everyday</i>	<i>Social media use is habitual</i>	4.4.2
		John Smith	<i>Only about twenty minutes</i>	<i>Social media use has a routine</i>	4.5.7
		Nucky Thompson	<i>I'm too busy with Facebook</i>	<i>Engaging with Facebook means not being left out</i>	4.6.9
4.9.7	Seven - Efficiency	Margaret Thompson	<i>Saves time I guess</i>	<i>Social media is efficient</i>	4.4.3
		John Smith	<i>You can talk instantly</i>	<i>Social media communication is instant</i>	4.5.1

		<i>Chalky White</i>	<i>Find out information in a more efficient way</i>	<i>Communication is efficient</i>	<i>4.8.6</i>
<i>4.9.8</i>	<i>Eight - The role of 'like'</i>	<i>Nucky Thompson</i>	<i>I would click like so they don't delete it</i>	<i>'Liking' means something</i>	<i>4.6.3</i>
		<i>Mickey Doyle</i>	<i>Get as many 'likes' as you want</i>	<i>'Liking' can be meaningful</i>	<i>4.7.7</i>
		<i>Chalky White</i>	<i>Usually it's something you can relate to</i>	<i>'Liking' means something</i>	<i>4.8.4</i>



#### 4.9.1 Group Superordinate Theme One - Being confident and expressing yourself

Gillian, Margaret, Nucky, Mickey, and Chalky all had interesting experiences when it came to confidence and expression. Gillian very much enjoyed the mechanisms that SM used to allow this self-expression to come through, namely pictures. She used this as a way to engage with other users and make new friends, an advert for being a friend with Gillian. Margaret's experience of becoming more confident related to her own feelings about having the time to plan what she would say and being able to do so through the use of SM. Her experiences seemed to lift an internal inhibition. Nucky's comments regarding this particular aspect of SM were fairly short and straightforward. I hypothesised that she thrived because she was not talking: she was typing. This appeared to be removed enough, from actually talking, for Nucky that she was more confident in being able to express herself. Mickey, much in the same way as Gillian enjoyed the opportunity to tell his friends about some of the things that he cared about. However, he seemed more inclined to use SM distribute this information to existing friends rather than to make new friends. Chalky spoke eloquently about liberation, SM was giving confidence that equated to popularity. This popularity was allowing his friends to speak with people they otherwise dare not speak to, which then got them invited to parties and suchlike.

#### 4.9.2 Group Superordinate Theme Two - Loneliness, being ignored/unseen

Gillian, John, and Nucky had very different experiences of feeling alone or being ignored. Gillian's description of being alone was about being unnoticed when contacting more popular (celebrity) users of Facebook. Her comments also alluded to becoming lost in a group chat with her friends. She would sometimes be responded to, but felt lonely. John had similar experiences to Gillian's latter description of loneliness. His comments implied that being unseen was perhaps an accident as users commenting simultaneously could make it difficult to follow the conversation. Nucky's experience of being ignored seemed to be quite different to Gillian and John. The account Nucky gave implied a sense of being ignored when trying to make new friends even amongst some of the people who had decided to add Nucky. As a result Nucky was not only selected over whom she added she made the choice to not speak to them first.

#### 4.9.3 Group Superordinate Theme Three - Control to use social media at will

It seems as though Gillian and John's account of this theme was fairly similar, and Nucky's appeared to be somewhat different. Gillian and John both indicate that they can come back to SM as and when they please. Nucky's account discussed the idea that there was nothing that could stop her from using SM. All three participants showed that they exuded some control over SM in that they were in charge of when they used it. Nevertheless, Nucky seemed to approach this from a position of being on SM and forces trying to stop her, whereas Gillian and John referred to a positive desire to return to accessing SM.

#### 4.9.4 Group Superordinate Theme Four - Role and status of social media users

All three participants who spoke about this theme approached it from a different stance. Gillian's experience discussed a notion of power and powerful users. She referred to herself as just a user reading tweets. I got the impression that she considered celebrities/users with many friends/followers to be more powerful. As such, the expectations of the lesser users were to read the pages that the celebrities or powerful users had so graciously populated with their comments. I believe Gillian felt powerless, she knew she had a role, and she knew she needed to complete it. Margaret gave a slightly different account of being able to keep some control over who saw what she did. There was a brief mention of celebrities, but Margaret was clear that her profile was private; she was not going to let just anyone see her posts. I think Margaret took the power to say no so that she did not feel as though she needed to justify why so many people couldn't see what she was posting. Margaret was powerful, in a powerless position. Mickey spoke about the role of the other users to post interesting content. He was explicit about how he felt when users posted boring content, so much so that he said his use of Facebook had declined as the other users were making it too boring to continue.

#### 4.9.5 Group Superordinate Theme Five - Identified roles for social media

Gillian, Margaret, John, Mickey, and Chalky all make it clear that their use of SM revolves around their expectations and needs. Gillian and Margaret seemed quite content with their description of using SM for seemingly specific reasons, both of

whom seemed to indicate the importance of birthdays. It is not clear the significance that birthdays have on SM. I feel that one interpretation given notions of confidence and expression (4.9.1), is that birthdays are the opportune moment to contact anyone. They may also enjoy the reciprocal nature of birthday greetings, potentially sensing a bout of euphoria when their friends flock to their respective pages to offer birthday greetings in full view of everyone else. John's identified use for SM was more straightforward, relieving stress and distribution of news. Although he also mentioned communication and advertising were other reasons SM had come to be. Mickey's account of roles for SM was difficult for me to understand. He indicated that SM was the same, but then mentioned differences where he then defined Twitter as useless and Facebook somewhat boring. I feel that Mickey was perhaps becoming disillusioned with SM use amongst himself and his peers. He did however choose to use it for games when he was bored. Chalky articulated a range of uses between himself and his peers. He was explicit about using Facebook for entertainment, updates for areas of interest, and to arrange to meet friends. Interestingly, all of the aforementioned participants, in one-way or another, commented that they used SM in different ways to their peers. It may be possible that SM was allowing them to be somewhat different to their peers.

#### 4.9.6 Group Superordinate Theme Six - Habit and routines

Whilst almost all participants touched on this topic in some way, it was explored in some detail with Margaret, John, and Nucky. Margaret spoke about her relationship with Facebook, commenting that she checked it everyday. But she was aware of her use enough to suggest that it was habitual and that if she needed to, she could get by without checking it. There did appear to be an element of contradiction here as she mentioned that if she did stop using Facebook she would have more of an attention span for other things. I am not sure that Facebook was purely habitual for Margaret. John's use of Facebook comparative to Margaret was habitual, as well as purposeful. He suggested a routine of about twenty-thirty minutes per day, focussing more on the fact that he only used Facebook to connect with people who were distant from him when he did use it. Nucky's use of Facebook was similar to Margaret, but it appeared to be more integral to her day-to-day routine. She mentioned that she used it all the time; she claimed she did nothing else. For Nucky, Facebook took priority over everything else. It seems that if Nucky was in a place that she maybe be trying to reduce her use of Facebook, she may

struggle. This theme indicates that for these participants SM is significant enough to become a part of daily life.

#### 4.9.7 Group Superordinate Theme Seven - Efficiency

This theme pertains to the efficiency that these participants saw within SM. Amongst all of the participants with whom the idea of efficiency was discussed, there was an overall consensus that SM kept them in the loop, as and when things were occurring. Margaret added that the typing made things easier which was related to confidence (4.9.1), but she also added comments about SM saving her own time when communicating with others. This was a sentiment shared by Chalky who made reference to short conversations being more worthwhile over SM than face-to-face. John's experience of the efficiency of SM seemed to be more aimed at saving time for others. John did allude to saving time for himself, but focussed predominantly on the time that he could save for others by sending them things that he thought that they might be interested in. It was of no surprise to me that SM seems to be so integral to the lives of these participants. There may be an opportunity to explore why SM was more seen as more of a viable option than other forms of communication such as short-messaging services (SMS), Chalky clarified this, he felt that things such as SMS needed to be directed at individuals and served a specific purpose. For me, this suggested SM's efficiency also highlighted the ability to get the message out without any prejudice as to where the message would be delivered.

#### 4.9.8 Group Superordinate Theme Eight - 'Like' serves a purpose

Amongst the participants with whom like was discussed, there were different approaches to when likes were used as what they could mean. I interpreted Nucky's expressions about liking to suggest that it validated the content that existed on Facebook. Thus, justifying the position the content took on SM. Nucky commented that she would like content to discourage others from taking it down. Given her demeanour, I understood this to suggest that Nucky would possibly take down content that she had uploaded if others had not liked it. Chalky's understanding of liking suggested that this would be content that he related to in some way. Interestingly, Chalky would also not like something if he did not necessarily wish to associate himself with the person who had posted the content. Mickey's relationship with liking happened to have a positive

psychological impact on himself as well as being disposable. The act of liking seems to have a multi-functional purpose for the different participants. It seems that overall, liking is a purposeful act. The purpose that liking serves appears dependent on the user, but it seems that this can be interchangeable.

#### 4.10 Summary of Analysis

The analysis highlighted the multifaceted use of SM amongst the different participants in the study. My interpretations indicated a number of different experiences, some common and some individual. There were eight themes that at least three participants spoke about, (see Table 7). The participants all articulated an in depth experience based on a developing relationship with SM. This has provided a rich view of an important phenomenon.

#### 4.11 Summary of Chapter

In this chapter I explained the process by which I analysed the data collected for the purpose of this research (4.2). I then discussed the experiences of using SM by each participant individually (4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, and 4.8). Next, I gave offered a narrative of the themes that were common across the participants (4.9). I concluded by giving a summary of this analysis (4.10) and chapter (4.11).

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

### **5.1 Chapter Overview**

In this chapter I will give a commentary of my findings with regard to the psychological underpinnings of my analysis (5.2). In so doing, I will be giving a clear and realistic summary of the connecting issues outlined by the participants of adolescents' use of SM. This will answer the research question established in chapter 2. I will also link back to the literature discussed throughout chapter 2 (5.2). I will then outline the limitations of the present research (5.3). Next, I will discuss the implications for practitioners, including EPs, and parents (5.4). Prior to my conclusion I will make my position within the research explicit through a reflexive discussion (5.5). I will then conclude by offering opinions on where I feel research in this area should be directed as well as a summaries of key findings (5.6) and this chapter (5.7).

### **5.2 Discussion in Relation to Research Question**

The current research set out to answer the question:

*What are adolescents' lived experiences of using social media?*

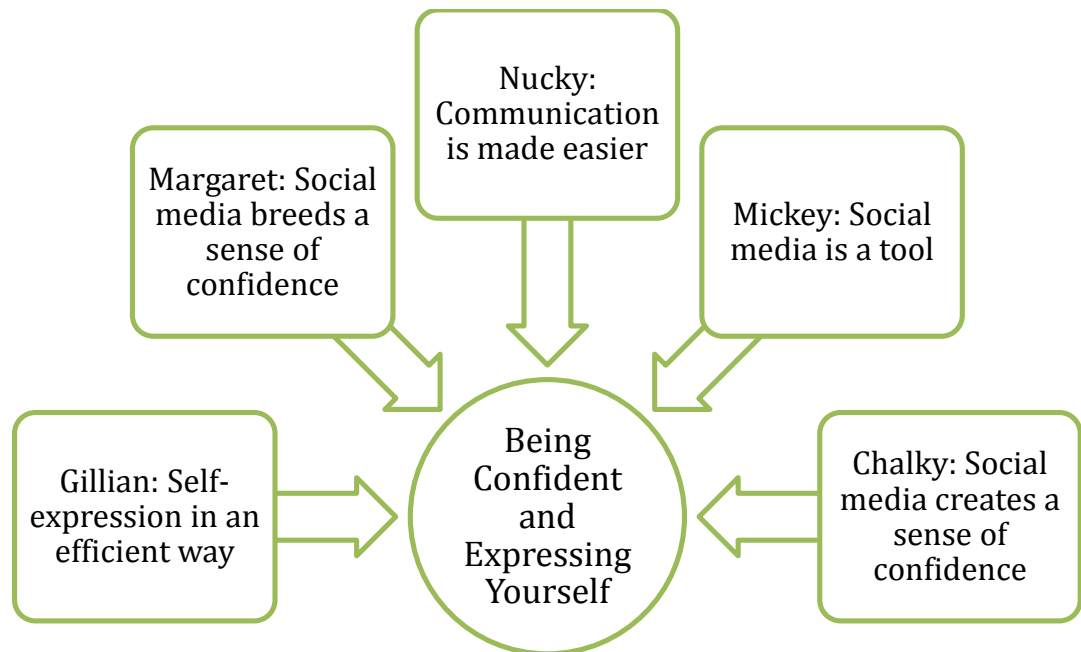
There were two sub-questions aimed at understanding the implications for practitioners, parents and young people.

#### **5.2.1 What are Adolescents' Lived Experiences of Using Social Media?**

This research question will be answered using the group superordinate themes and selected pure/prevalent superordinate themes as required.

### 5.2.1.1 *Being Confident and Expressing Yourself*

Figure 1: Group Superordinate Theme 1: Being Confident and Expressing Yourself



One lived experience shared by five of the participants was the feeling of increased confidence.

As shown in the analysis, the five participants that articulated this sentiment about SM appeared to enjoy the benefits that were afforded alongside this. But why does SM seem to increase confidence? All of the participants mentioned that they had been using SM since approximately 13 years-old, outlining a routine that meant they would be using SM daily. One possible explanation is that the minimum age requirement for SM use is 13, though it is possible that these participants were aware of this and were actually users for a period before the age of 13. It would be a valid assumption to expect a level of competence that fostered confidence. Deci and Ryan (1991) would certainly argue that a sense of competence would allow an individual to engage and interact freely and with confidence. However, Nucky also expressed that it was easier because it is not actually talking. My interpretation of this is an extension and manifestation of the concept of deindividuation coined by Zimbardo (1969). Deindividuation can explain why people may typically behave differently when they are either, surrounded by many others who are also behaving in a similar way, or when they feel the likelihood of them

being identified is not particularly strong. In this study, SM is identified as non-anonymous. So a lack of anonymity would be mean deindividuation may not apply, but the once-removed element of speaking through a computer screen, outlined by Mickey, may be enough of a buffer to allow this confidence to thrive.

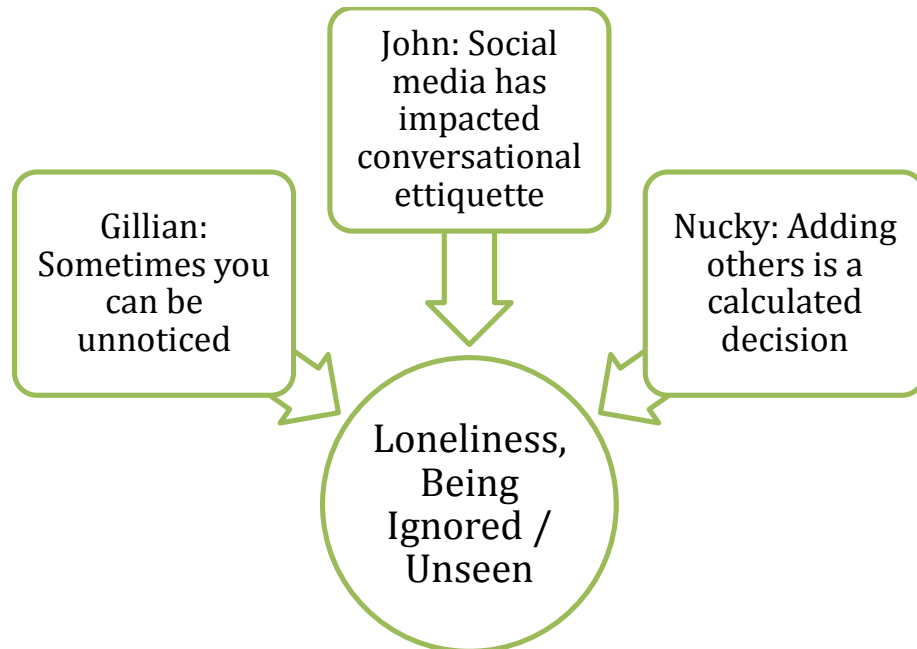
Focussing on Nucky's comments about not actually talking, but rather typing, it is possible that this is another explanation for the increased levels of perceived confidence. There are various findings from organisations that highlight the undetected speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) amongst secondary pupils (Meschi, Micklewright, Vignoles, and Lindsay, 2012; Department for Education (DfE), 2013; The Communication Trust, 2013). It is apparent SLCN has an impact on literacy skills amongst this population. If they engage with SM behind closed doors, at will, with the freedom to ignore anything that contains an element of threat, is likely to be a more attractive prospect to engage with others.

There was an element of the participants discussing notions of identity, though never explicitly. The increased feelings of confidence, and ability to speak with people whom they would not normally readily identify with, I feel symbolises a desire to use resources available. Is it likely that a generation of middle-aged adults are stuck being who they are because they did not have the opportunity to be anyone else? Or are the next generation's adults more likely to become who they were meant to be because of SM gave them the confidence to do so? Either way, the participants in the current research were ready to take the risk given their perceived confidence.



### 5.2.1.2 *Loneliness, Being Ignored/Unseen*

Figure 2: Group Superordinate Theme 2: Loneliness, Being Unseen/Ignored



Another lived experience, shared by three of the participants, was a sense of being unnoticed or ignored, potentially leading to feelings of loneliness.

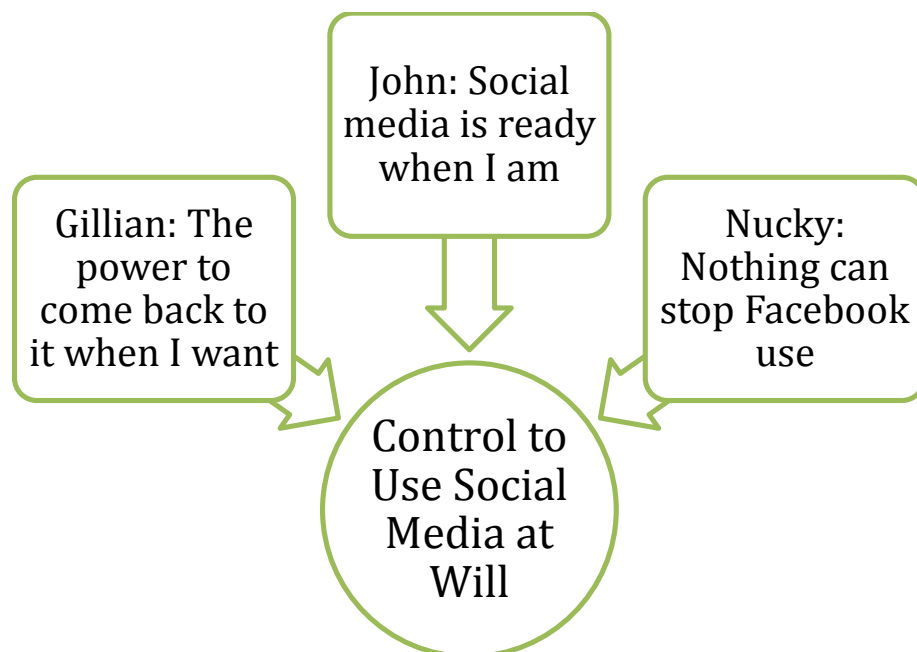
Where this idea of SM was discussed with these three participants, there almost appeared to be a sense of resignation, as if the participant was powerless to do anything about this. This sense of being ignored, depending on the interpretation could have implications for the participant's self-esteem/ego. Harter (1993) speaks of the idea that one of the functions of the Self Concept is to protect the self-esteem. Harter (1993) adds that the self-concept is the set of rules, boundaries and understanding that we live our life by. The development of self-concept starts from the day we are born but is an evolving process. If we explore this possibility then it imperative that our self-esteem/ego is kept intact. But, the way in which Gillian, and to some extent Nucky, described a sense of being invited in and then ignored leads me to feel that their self-esteems may be at risk. Gillian made reference to being ignored/unnoticed by real-life friends whereas Nucky spoke of random individuals who had added then going on to ignoring her. In both cases, these are people who have in some sense invited Gillian and Nucky in, only to then ignore them. Gillian remained passive suggesting that she would eventually become noticed. Nucky, I believe in an attempt to protect her self-esteem,

decided that someone would need to add her and make the first move to speak with her. John's experience with being unseen refers to the changing landscape of digital interaction. Ignoring others was not necessarily an intentional act; rather in the fast-paced environment of a group chat it is possible that some comments get lost amongst others. Another reason that Mickey highlighted was that speaking via a computer screen was not the same as speaking face-to-face or by telephone.

John spoke about the impact on conversational etiquette. Whilst it is arguably possible that a group of people speaking face-to-face could just as readily miss the comments of one of the group, it is possible that the audit trail nature of text-based conversations could lead others to be more likely to notice being ignored, or otherwise. It remains to be seen whether John's assertion that there is an impact has any direction positive or negative.

#### 5.2.1.3 Control to Use Social Media at Will

Figure 3: Group Superordinate Theme 3: Control to Use Social Media at Will



An additional lived experience of SM use amongst the sample was a sense of control to use SM at will.

Two of the three participants who verbalised the elements of control when engaging with SM, Gillian and John, seemed to be alluding to a choice to return to SM. I

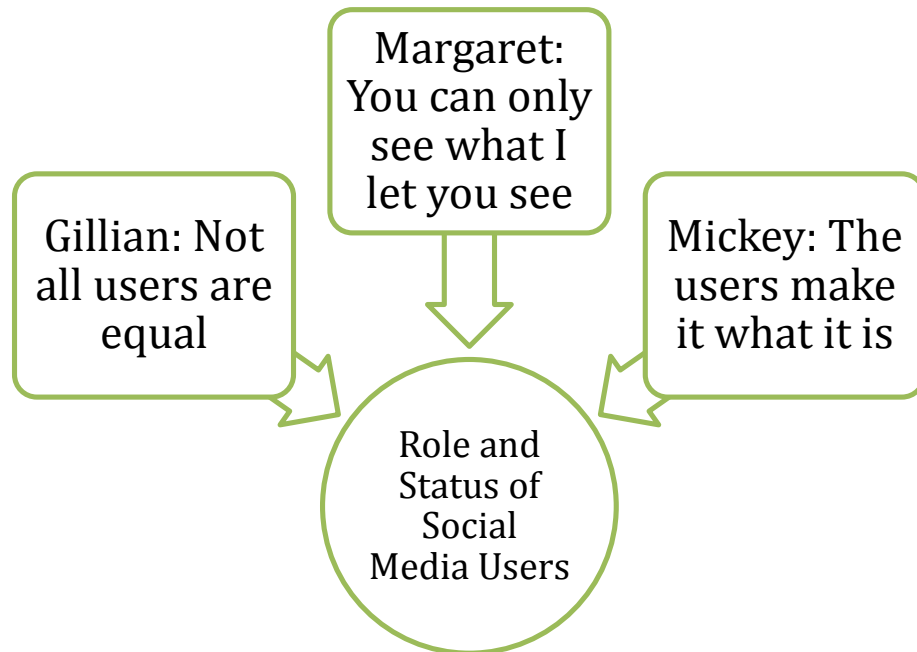
understood this best in-line with Choice Theory as expressed by Glasser (1998a, 1998b). A fundamental tenet of Choice Theory is that the only behaviour that can be controlled is our own, so these participants were exercising that control. Additionally, this can work in conjunction with SDT, defined by Deci and Ryan (1991). One of the three elements of SDT, autonomy, suggests that the choice and control to behave in the way that we choose motivates us to do so. John felt that SM was ready when he was, it stands to reason then that he uses SM.

Nucky's exploration of this control seems to be more aggressive, more protective of her SM use and presence. Her assertion that only physical restrictions (no WiFi/Internet) were able to keep her from using SM when she wanted to suggests some degree of autonomy. However, coupled with other comments from Nucky, regarding preoccupation with Facebook to avoid being left out (4.6.9), Gillian pertaining to the omnipresence of SM, and by definition the Internet (4.3.1), Margaret's assertion that she checks her SM account everyday (4.4.2), John's use of Facebook in a routine manner (4.5.6), Mickey's ability to use Facebook when he is bored (4.7.6), as well as Chalky's contention that not existing on Facebook means not existing (4.8.1) or only using Facebook because your friends do (4.8.2). It therefore seemed to me that the participants had different interpretations of SM relating to this theme.

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth, 1973) describes an enduring bond between one person (usually a child) and something (an attachment figure) through time and space. One interpretation of the participants' use of SM in this context, implies the participants are the children and SM would be a conduit for the, or actor in lieu of any, attachment figure. As such, the participants seemed to be comforted by the knowledge that their profiles were always intact and they could be seen. They would conceivably felt that other SM users were keeping them in mind. In this interpretation, not being allowed to access to SM in schools could create an issue for these participants.

#### 5.2.1.4 *Role and Status of Social Media Users*

Figure 4: Group Superordinate Theme 4: Role and Status of Social Media Users



The sample from the present study indicated experiences outlining an element of status and roles amongst SM users.

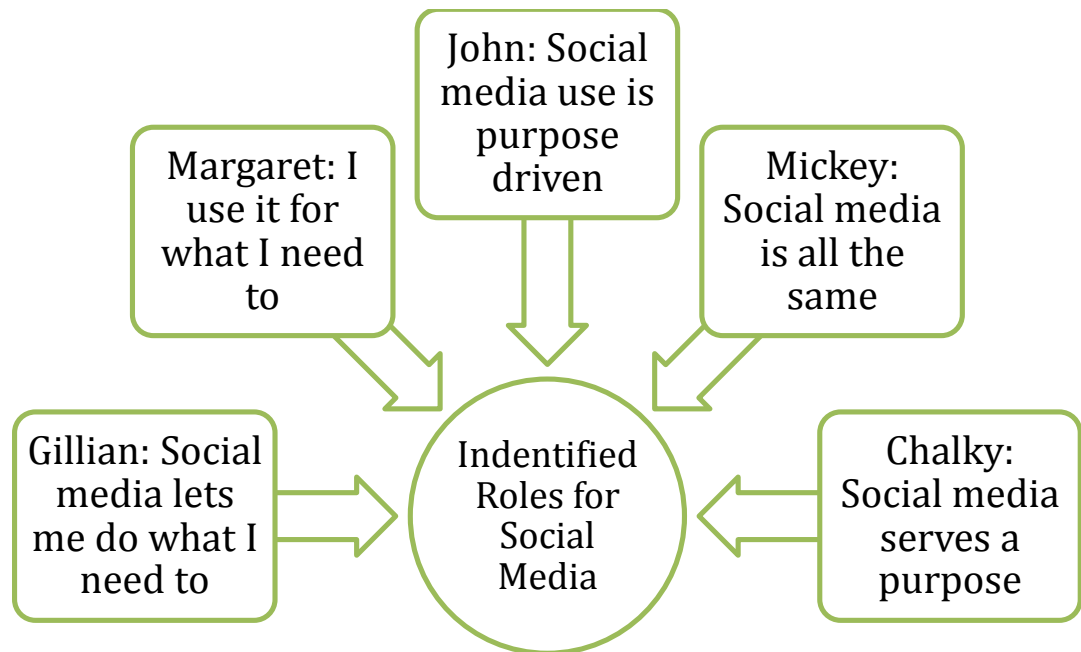
The three participants who expressed a notion of role and status amongst users seem to be indicating an understanding of what might be expected of them when they engage with SM. In terms of SDT (Deci and Ryan, 1991) these participants would be experiencing a sense of competence as well as autonomy. Predominantly, I feel that the sense of competence in the use of SM allowed the participants to use it as they saw fit. Margaret's ability to regulate her profile to show others only what she wanted them to see was indicative of this. Mickey seemed to reinforce this idea, suggesting that the way users interacted with SM defined the duration and way in which he chose to engage with SM. Gillian's expression of this notion seems to be more rooted in the sense of relatedness she felt with the other users on SM, choosing to refer to herself as just a user and suggesting that celebrity users were trying to tell them something.

Anecdotally, there were sporadic comments by the different participants with regard to the numbers of friends/followers on SM and what this may have symbolised. Whilst there was little focus through the analysis about the significance of the number of

friends/followers, participants seemed to indicate that the more the merrier. The only exception seemed to be Chalky's interjection, as below, about the use of the term friend.

#### 5.2.1.5 *Identified Roles of Social Media*

Figure 5: Group Superordinate Theme 5: Identified Roles of Social Media



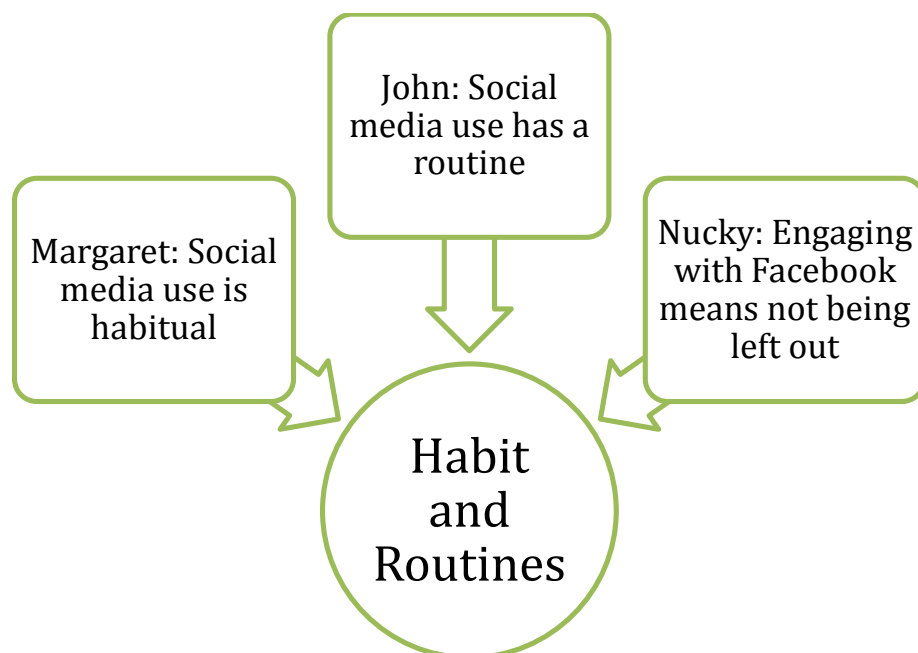
The sample from the present study also indicated experiences outlining SM having an identified role in their lives.

It seems a simple idea that these users engaged with SM because it had a purpose for them. Perhaps the most important thing to note here would be what role SM had taken. For four of these five of these participants, the continual interaction with peers was one of the reasons. Mickey seemed to be more fixated on the users becoming boring and this resulted in him predominantly using Facebook to play games to escape boredom. Most participants engaged with SM with a hope to escape the real world. Research has shown that externally oriented people tend to engage with fantasy more than their internally oriented counterparts (Baker, 1971). That is to say, people who tended to identify with an external locus of control used escapism more. Whilst it not possible to generalise, there might be a relationship that could be explored. Additionally, as SM is a rapidly developing phenomenon, it would be necessary to explore the implications of such a resource over short, medium, and long-terms.

With the exception of Mickey, the participants above all indicated the use of SM to stay in touch with peers. John added that he also used Facebook to help calm down. Excluding John, whose brother and friends were far away, the other participants wanted to stay in touch with friends whom they had known from school or real-life except when they just wanted to have a quick chat with someone. The participants were being sociable whilst being tucked away in their bedrooms, alone.

#### 5.2.1.6 *Habit and Routines*

Figure 6: Group Superordinate Theme 6; Habit and Routines



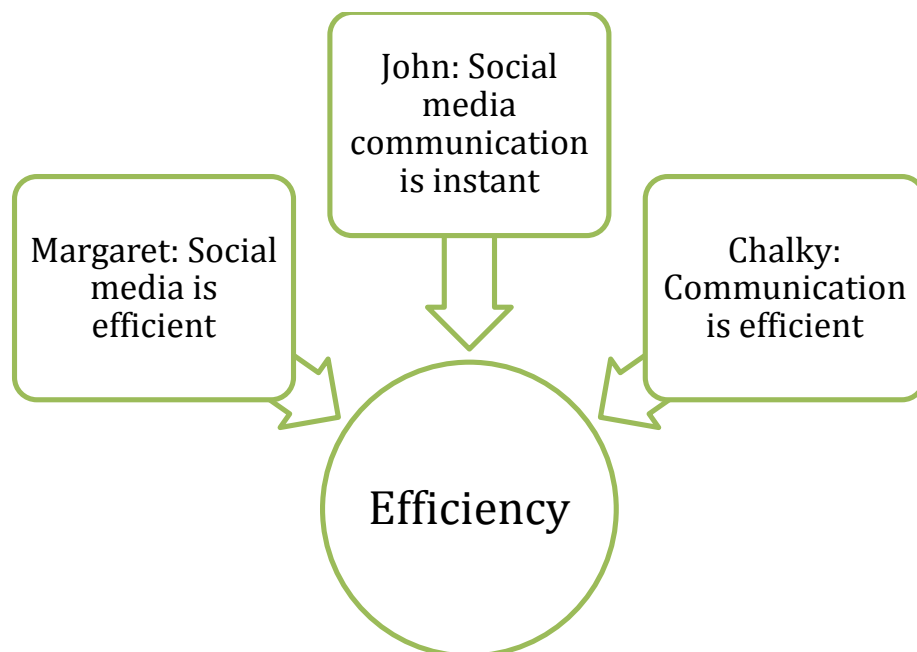
The participants in the present study highlighted experiences with SM that revolved around habits and routines.

John and Margaret spoke fondly of SM as a habitual/routine action that fulfilled a need. Gillian and Chalky, whilst not a focus of their respective interviews, also mentioned the routine with which they used SM for various purposes. They would scroll through looking for interesting or new content. When they found something, they would view it and move on. It was apparent that there was a constant stream of new content streaming through to their profiles by way of timelines or feeds. Given the mode through which this was happening it would stand to reason that this would be preapproved content. With Nucky, this was more a case of making sure that she was not left out from what

her friends were becoming involved in. I feel that this was Nucky's way of staying in touch/being in the loop. The routines themselves may be of little significance but the propensity for the routine seems to be substantiated. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Dewey (1922) coined the phrase social capital, though no proper definition was given. In modern terms, social capital theory (Berkman and Glass, 2000; Kreuter and Lezin, 2002) pertains to the collective value of all of the constituent elements that relate to a particular individual in a social context. In terms of SM, social capital could be seen as the collective value of the SNSs accessed and the collective value of the individuals/their SM behaviours. These participants developed a habit/routine to enhance their own social currency/capital to become more attractive a prospect as a friend. Value begets value; an interpretation for these participants is that they have these habits and routines to keep a consistent social currency value. Just like the stock market, this can fluctuate.

#### 5.2.1.7 Efficiency

Figure 7: Group Superordinate Theme 7: Efficiency



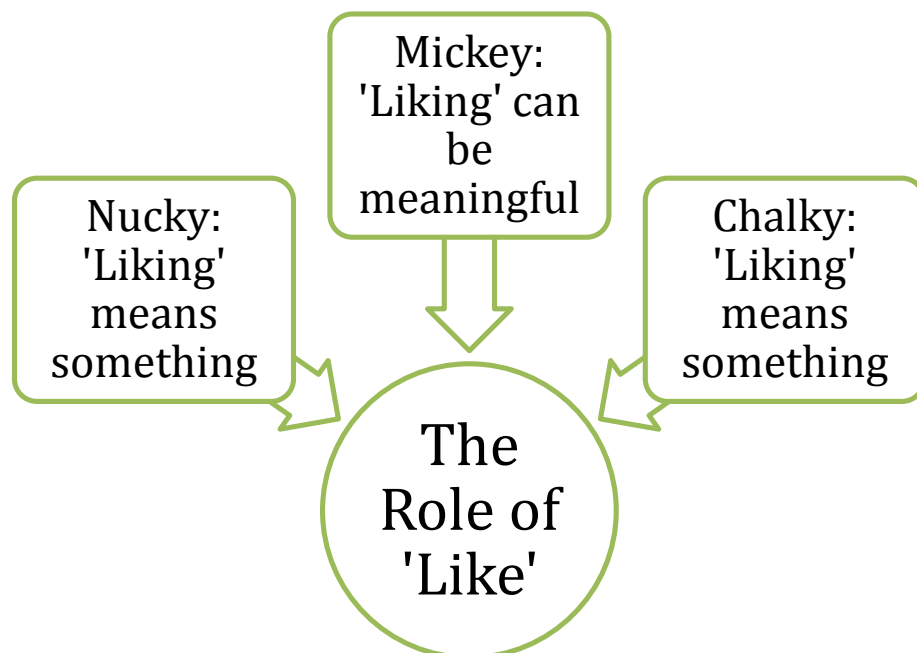
The participants in the current study articulated experiences of SM that described efficiency of communication.

The three participants here described the use of SM because of the level of efficiency that it afforded them. This was mainly in relation to the speed at which information was transmitted between peers or from news sources to the users. They all referred to SM indirectly as a timesaving device. The question arises, were these participants looking for a timesaving mechanism or did the time-efficiency of SM entice and habituate these users?

Gillian, Margaret, Nucky, Mickey, and Chalky all alluded to, without focussing on, the conceptual idea that all of a person's preferences, bio-data, photos, videos and affiliations could exist through SM. This then saved time for users when deciding if it was worthwhile to add someone as a friend. To some extent, this overlaps with the concept of social capital/currency, as above, but this efficiency also means social skills are secondary to a social existence. It appeared as though the primary way to engage with peers online is to be an attractive prospect as a friend. Essentially, these users are creating friendship adverts.

#### 5.2.1.8 *The Role of 'Like'*

Figure 8: Group Superordinate Theme 8: The Role of 'Like'



The participants in the present study spoke about the role of like in the experiences of SM.



The three participants who spoke about the role of like alluded to the positive impact that liking something could have. Nucky spoke about clicking like so others would not delete their content; to me this implied that she would appreciate someone doing the same thing for her. I felt this because of her demeanour and the non-verbal cues during our interview. Mickey also spoke about collecting likes and the value they held. These link to the concepts of self-esteem (Harter, 1993), as above (5.2.1.2), and the idea of social currency/capital (Berkman and Glass, 2000; Kreuter and Lezin, 2002), discussed above (5.2.1.6). Chalky highlighted an element of liking that reinforced the idea of like relating to social currency/capital (4.8.4). Given Chalky's comments, it seems there is a political agenda at play when users choose to like content they come across on Facebook. I imagine this is similar to when users make decisions about adding/following other users.

#### 5.2.2 Discussion of Analysis with Reference to the Systematic Literature Review

The literature explored in chapter 2, took a predominantly top down approach in attempting to understand the views and experiences of adolescents' use of SM. This was obtained mainly through the use of questionnaires. Additionally, there did not appear to be any distinction made between the use of SM and other websites that allows users to create profiles and aliases, *e.g. common interest forums, blogging sites, etc.* I outlined in the introduction the reasons why I felt that SM seemed to be different and these appear to be reinforced through some of the conversations I had with the participants. In this section, I revisit the same literature with my interpretation given my findings.

Another area of interest that seems to have been uncovered through the literature highlighted a discourse amongst researchers and practitioners that adolescents were somewhat naïve in their use and access of SM. Whilst the current research indicated some areas in which adolescents appeared to be vulnerable when online, the discourse amongst these participants seemed to suggest that they were using SM to their advantage. The analysis in the previous chapter highlighted the importance of SM use amongst this sample of adolescents.

### 5.2.2.1 *Review Paper One*

Review paper 1, from chapter 2 (2.3.1) outlines the researcher's positions of SC existing as a triad: sense of belonging, psychosocial wellbeing, & identity development and processes (Allen et al., 2014). They go on to highlight the importance of SC throughout adolescent development and the apparent paradox that exists because of SM. From the current study, the analysis highlighted the importance of connectedness for all of the participants. Gillian expressed this as the permanence of SM (4.3.1) as well as the ability to speak to anyone in the world (4.3.2). Margaret seemed to identify with SC by talking about fitting in (4.4.5) on SM. She also highlighted some of the difficulties that hindered SC such as bullying (4.4.7). John discussed this notion through the idea of talking instantly with others (4.5.1). The participant for whom this was most distinct, Nucky, spoke about the close friends she had made through SM (4.6.2) and wanting to meet more people (4.6.4). Nucky was also able to articulate some of the internal conflicts that she experienced by wanting to block/report users who upset her experiences on SM (4.6.1). Mickey's expression of SC, seemed to suggest that SM was not the best way forward because of the sterile/clinical nature of interaction through the computer screen (4.7.2). Whilst Chalky also spoke of the instant nature of communicating with other (4.8.5), adding that SM seemed to distort social communities (4.8.9). Interestingly, he also added that people needed to use SM or they would stop existing (4.8.1) and he felt people predominantly used it because of their friends (4.8.2). All of the participants in the current study related to this idea of SC at some level. Allen et al. (2014) described the paradoxical nature of SM; suggesting that it was the conduit through which SC exists but also fostered behaviours which hinder SC, namely alienation and ostracism. It seems that participants in this study were able to articulate why they continued to engage with SM in spite of the negatives that exist.

Allen et al. (2014) referred to SDT (Deci and Ryan, 1991), which attempts to define motivation in terms of relatedness, mastery, and autonomy. They maintained that relatedness was the only element of SDT that related to the use of SM. It appears that the participants in this study highlighted the importance/relevance of a sense of autonomy (as above). Notwithstanding the limitations of this research, as explored below, there appears to be evidence suggesting that autonomy plays a role in these participants' on-going interaction with SM and to a lesser degree, competence. These were shown in many of the group superordinate themes (4.9.1, 4.9.2, 4.9.3, and 4.9.6),

which were composed of the individual superordinate themes. Gillian related to these notions in her description of deleting content (4.3.5) and when she spoke about returning to SM at will (4.3.3). Margaret alluded to these when she spoke about other users needing her permission to view her profile (4.4.10) and not always following people back (4.4.11). John exemplified this through descriptions of SM being ready when he was (4.5.8) as well the routine nature with which he accessed SM (4.5.7). Nucky, perhaps the most intense user amongst the participants, made reference to adding people but waiting for them to contact her (4.6.5) as well as explaining how nothing could stop her from accessing Facebook (4.6.8). Mickey interestingly spoke of Facebook being boring, leading to a decline in use (4.7.5), but then also made reference to using Facebook on his iPod to play games, as a way of keeping himself entertained (4.7.6). Chalky articulated a use of Facebook that indicated a sense of relatedness, but prioritised autonomy and mastery. That is, he would like content he could relate to, but if he did not like the person who had posted it, he would ignore it (4.8.4) suggesting that the funny pictures were the primary use of Facebook (4.8.3). As such, I feel it is pertinent that such avenues are explored through further research.

#### 5.2.2.2 Review Paper Two

O’Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) outlined a commentary of the way that children/adolescents would use SM. The participants in the current study generally seemed to be consciously aware of their use of SM and the reasons that they did so. There was some evidence to indicate that the parents and professionals alike should be more aware of the role and pitfalls of SM. I will discuss these in the implications section of the discussion (5.4).

Whilst the scope of the current research does not allow for any generalisations to be made, there seems to be limited evidence to suggest that the overall negative narrative established by O’Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) is justified. It remains apparent that more research would need to be conducted to this effect.

#### 5.2.2.3 Review Paper Three

The paper by Khan, Wohn, and Ellison (2014) looked at the constituent factors that could predict the likelihood of informal academic collaboration. This area was not

within the scope of the current research. However, in Gillian's interview it became clear that she felt there was a role for SM, specifically Twitter, to be used to enhance learning opportunities in the classroom (4.3.10). Additionally, there were elements within the conversation I had with John that highlighted the role that SM took in allowing him to communicate schoolwork with his peers (4.5.3). Though there was little actual work occurring online, predominantly the sharing of what may have been expected of adolescents who had taken a day off from school. Whilst Margaret alluded to the role of groups on SM (4.4.5), she did not mention academic collaboration. None of the participants in the current study emphasised a focus of the role SM took in their academic careers. This could be a result of the focus of the semi-structured interview.

Interestingly, Chalky commented on the word friend becoming a verb. Much in the same way as Khan, Wohn, and Ellison (2014) had identified friending and the capacity for them to communicate with few, if any, barriers. Chalky commented that he found this to be somewhat disturbing, suggesting that the word friend was becoming meaningless. His thoughts mirrored my earlier remarks regarding the term friend as a verb.

#### 5.2.2.4 *Review Paper Four*

Pujazon-Zazik and Park (2010) gave an overview of literature and discussed general Internet use amongst adolescents in the USA. Their findings seemed to be based on descriptive statistics. There is little that can be compared between this study and the current study. It is worth recognising that as useful as the descriptive statistics appear to be, there is little exploration as to the extent to which any results may be true. That is to say, there was no real explanation as to why some of the findings seemed to stand and any exceptions that may exist.

#### 5.2.2.5 *Review Paper Five*

Cookingham and Ryan (2015) wrote about the evolution of norms and the changing landscape of social interaction. Older research by Steinberg and Kinchloe (1998) highlighted the accelerated nature of child development based on the access to information from which children may previously have been sheltered. The easiest way to understand this would be an exploration of Moore's Law (Moore, 1965). The general

stipulation is that over time, technology will become twice as powerful or half as expensive through 18-24 month cycles. In relation to the statements by Cookingham and Ryan (2015) as well as Steinberg and Kinchloe (1998), adolescent social interaction perpetually evolves by virtue of access to, as well as nature of use of, technology, namely SM. The most obvious evidence of this from the current study was Chalky's comments on the how he felt the normal social community was becoming distorted (4.8.9). To some extent other participants alluded to a changing landscape that allowed the manufacture of the self through a fastidious and constant monitoring of a SM profile. Gillian outlined this through comments pertaining to the deletion of unfavourable content on SM (4.3.5). Other evidence of this from the current participant sample came from the group superordinate theme being confident and expressing yourself (4.9.1), whereby participants explicitly stated that they/their peers were more confident online.

The research by Cookingham and Ryan (2015) outlined the mechanical process of adolescents' use of SM/SNSs, I previously described this as reductionist. As above, the analysis from the present study was able to add an element of why. This allowed some understanding of the propensity of this sample to continue to engage with SM. The group superordinate themes explored in section 4.9 highlighted four areas, each common to at least half of the participants, which were positive reasons for this sample to engage with SM (4.9.1, 4.9.3, 4.9.7, and 4.9.8). One of the conclusions from Cookingham and Ryan (2015) was that the predominant negative experiences jeopardised the social and sexual wellness of this age group. Whilst there was some evidence of exposure to difficult social and inappropriate adult natured situations, the experiences described by the participants did not appear to have a negative focus. Rather, there were largely positive experiences that were interrupted by sporadic negative instances, with the exception of addiction. I reiterate the need for professionals to stay up-to-date with developments in this field (Cookingham and Ryan, 2015) and to remain proactive with supporting adolescent social and sexual health. However, I think the current study may suggest that adolescents have a good amount of wellness-building skills and qualities that need to be encouraged.

#### 5.2.2.6 *Review Paper Six*

Barker (2009) used a questionnaire in an attempt to understand adolescent motivation/use of SM. This top down view of adolescent motivation to engage with SM highlighted malignant disposition amongst the participants, which Barker (2009) suggested was evidence of an open shift between ingroup/outgroup identities. This assertion appears negative, however, in relation to the group subordinate theme regarding confidence (4.9.1). Other possible explanations could be adolescents being confident enough to be themselves or experimenting with self-identity. Chalky indicated that on one hand he was unsure if he could trust the content he was seeing on SM (4.8.8) but also was explicit that the confidence gained through SM (4.8.7) could allow users to make more friends from within groups they would not normally feel comfortable associating with. The former was also echoed by Gillian in her exclamation that profiles could be manicured (4.3.5) and that on some level, the content was untrue (4.3.6). The group themes outlined in section 4.9 once again indicate the motivation for using SM amongst the participants in the current research. Of the total of eight group superordinate themes relating to the outlined experiences of the participants, there were five that could be construed as non-malicious, motivational elements of SM (4.9.1, 4.9.3, 4.9.5, 4.9.7, and 4.9.8). In fact, the role of the like feature actually performed a role seemingly altruistic in nature, Nucky claiming that she would like content so others would not delete it (4.6.3).

Although Barker (2009) indicates the two most popular SM sites used amongst the participants in the study were Facebook and MySpace, the two most popular in the current study were Facebook and Twitter. Whilst no conclusions can be made from this, anecdotally, when I spoke with the participants prior to each interview none of them knew of anyone who still used MySpace. This perhaps adds further evidence to the evolving landscapes through which social interaction occurs for adolescents (Cookingham and Ryan, 2015).

#### 5.2.2.7 *Review Paper Seven*

The review paper by Best, Manktelow, and Taylor (2014) focussed on overall online communication that included within it SM. This group outlined papers that discussed various benefits and drawbacks of SM. There seemed to be an indication that the lack of

anonymous/isolated nature of online interaction increased the risk of exposure to harm. To some extent, Nucky reinforces this sentiment by mentioning that it was difficult to respond to negative experiences (4.6.7), as does Mickey indicating that computer-based interaction lacked an element of realness (4.7.2). However, Nucky also contradicts the suggestion that being online has isolated her, claiming that she has developed close friendships with other users online (4.6.2).

Whilst Best et al. (2014) suggest that there is limited efficacy for the programmes currently being used by practitioners, Gillian highlights that school staff could do more to use SM to engage with their students (4.3.10).

#### 5.2.2.8 *Review Paper Eight*

McCartney (2012) wrote what appeared to be a short information piece attempting to advise nurses on the SM behaviours of adolescents. The current research alone could refute much of the worst-case scenario highlighted. Though the content may not be generalisable, it shows that there is likely to be an almost infinite number of permutations of experiences and scenarios when adolescents engage with SM. These are likely to contain positive and negative experiences, but such labels would need to be applied by the users, not the professionals. With the exception of issues of CP and safety, reframing techniques (Beck, 1997; Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and Positive Psychology (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) could be usefully employed. This would also be applicable to the professionals.

#### 5.2.2.9 *Review Paper Nine*

The aim of the paper by Landoll, La Greca, and Lai (2013) was to develop a questionnaire aimed to assess and measure negative experiences with SM. Some of the participants in the current study highlighted negative experiences with peers, such as Margaret's concern for younger users (4.4.6) and isolated comments from Gillian and Mickey. However, there seemed to be exposure to negative experiences wider than interactions with peers. Margaret outlines she is aware of bad things happening (4.4.8); Nucky explains how she finds it difficult to respond to negative experiences (4.6.7). It would be misleading to suggest that these experiences were the result of interactions with peers.

With the exception of CP issues, what is the difference between peers teasing each other face-to-face and via SM? Landoll, La Greca, and Lai (2013) recognise that most SNSs enhance adolescent friendships/communications yet they focus on the negative. It seems useful to develop a tool to understand the negative experiences of adolescents.

A key message to take from this research is the way in which experiences could be understood. The intricate nature with which they appeared within the six participants here suggests that amongst wider sample populations, much of the nuance that exists in this experience will be lost.

### *5.3 Limitations of the Current Research*

Given the nature of the current research, an exploratory IPA, there are some overall limitations. First and foremost, a sample size of six cannot be considered representative of the general population. As such, the findings could really only be considered as a gateway to understanding some of the next steps in this area. Additionally, they could only be seen as an indication of some of the experiences of adolescents in their use of SM. It is worth noting that these experiences are organic. The current study was designed as an IPA study. Other methods of analysis may have been better placed to be more assumptive.

#### *5.3.1 Power*

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) highlight the necessity for a good quality interview to enable a detailed account of the experience being researched. To enable this to happen it would have been helpful if I was able to develop a good sense of rapport with each of the six participants. Given the time constraints I was only able to meet with each participant once as an external person to the school. My role as the link EP within this school meant that I had been in the school many times working with other children. The participants could have seen me as a person of power from outside of the school system. I stuck to principals of unconditional positive regard outlined by Rogers (1951), withholding any negative judgment and accepting the person as he/she is. It may have been possible that the participants felt as I was extraneous to the school system: I was powerful.



There was an age difference between the participants and myself. I asked questions about themselves and their friends/families. Moreover, I asked about their use of SM. As it turns out, this is particularly intimate. Above all else, this took place in the school setting, where students might be the least influential members of the hierarchical structure.

### 5.3.2 *Use of Language*

Child development has been accelerated and manipulated by exposure to technologies and systems (Steinberg and Kinchloe, 1998). However, in a reversal of the ideas discussed in the previous section (5.3.1), it is possible that the popular vernacular amongst adolescents was beyond my understanding. The interviews I conducted were reliant on language; a text-based interview may have yielded additional information.

Additionally, it is possible that my use of language was beyond some of the participants. Where I felt it was appropriate I offered to rephrase questions but this may have changed the meaning of the question or meant something different to the participants.

### 5.3.3 *Researcher's Agenda*

My presence during the interview and analysis is likely to have had an impact. My role during the analysis can be accounted for by considering the hermeneutical circle, but during the interview process Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) highlighted me as a co-participant. I engage with active listening as part of my day-to-day role as a TEP. During the interview process, I did my best to ensure that I was able to co-participate with the participants by asking probing questions at appropriate times. As the interviews progressed, I became more adept with this skill. Smith and colleagues suggest that the best interviews appear more like conversations. Personally, I feel that the later interviews that I conducted felt more conversational.

#### 5.3.4 *Demand Characteristics*

Weber and Cook (1972) describe demand characteristics as the role participants opt to take on through their involvement in research. They highlight four roles. (1) Good participant; the participant attempts to anticipate the researcher's hypothesis and therefore fulfil those requirements and does not wish to ruin the study. (2) Negative participant; the participant once again tries to anticipate the researcher's hypothesis, but only to try to sabotage the research. (3) Faithful participant; the participant does exactly as required with no deviation from the prescribed instructions. (4) Apprehensive participant; the participant becomes consumed by the evaluation of their responses; as such their input becomes socially desirable. These can be described as a continuum, with participants positioning themselves at different stages throughout the process.

In an attempt to ensure that participants did not feel pressurised in to taking-on any of the above roles, I reinforced their rights to withdraw participation from the research and the anonymous nature of participation (including the limits of confidentiality). I carefully considered the seating arrangements during the interview.

#### 5.4 *Implications for Practitioners and Parents*

The sub-research questions contained within the research question were:

- How can these experiences inform the practice of professionals?
- What are the implications of the lived experiences of Social Media use by adolescents for Young People, Parents, Educational Psychologists, and other professionals?

Locally, EPs within schools have a role to train, consult, advise, and assess. Whilst the findings are not generalisable there are certainly areas of interest that arise as a result of this research. From personal experience, the role of the EP in secondary schools can seem much like that of a fire-fighter: reactionary. As such, the array of training and consultation sessions may not be particularly frequent. A proactive stance could be taken by way of bringing the findings to the attention of professionals in school. The findings above can be used to open dialogue with these professionals. This does not need to be child specific. More generic areas can, and should, be addressed at the whole school level (child protection/staying safe online), but I am an advocate of introducing

psychology in the classroom. The theories and psychological mechanisms explored above may well be introduced in an accessible way to inform the way that users choose to engage with SM. Given what we know about the changing landscape of child development (Steinberg and Kinchloe, 1998) it stands to reason that adolescents feasibly have the resources required to access this information.

Furthermore, where EPs are privileged enough to work individually with adolescents in a secondary school, I feel that a discussion about their SM presence and experiences is relevant. This would also be relevant for any other professionals who work with this population, especially support-staff in schools. This could create training opportunities where other professionals feel skilled enough to be able to have and facilitate these discussions. It is not the job of children and young people in difficult situations to open up to the support network around them; rather it is the support network's job to create an environment where such discussions can be had.

Other implications could include the need to catch/keep up with the rapidly growing technological advances that are so commonplace in the school corridors, playgrounds, living rooms and bedrooms. It is not necessary to have a SM presence and be up-to-date with every development, but if the landscape for child development/social interaction is changing professionals need to be aware.

Other implications for professionals could lead to an understanding of what we may be asking certain people to do when we expect them to sit in lessons learning about things they may not be able to see the direct relevance of. This may have always been the case, but SM is a somewhat tangible tool used by teachers and students alike. It is possible that it will be easier to relate to. So, if an SM profile is an extension of a person, effectively we could well be asking children to switch off facets of themselves. These facets may well be considered to be imperative to their role in a particular social network, or even their identities as a whole. Given that SM was seen as the advert for the users, it may be worth considering the rules in school regarding the use of mobile phones. The school from the current research has a zero-tolerance policy on the use of mobile phones. Effectively, these participants are being told that they cannot exist when they are at school. It may prove worthwhile to have a designated 'phone-zones', where this activity is allowed. Additionally, the displays that often decorate school corridors

could contain information about staying safe online/knowing where to go for help and advice/healthy use of SM.

Schools becoming more phone-friendly could instigate a culture of cohesion and enjoyment for children and young-people who may not engage with traditional school approaches. Within reason, schools could use a SM presence to foster a sense of community and develop an effective dialogue with students/communities alike. Whilst this would need monitoring, it is important to recognise that for participants such as Gillian, the capacity to communicate with her teachers was a potential benefit for her.

It is important that parents have conversations with their children about their child's use of SM and perhaps Internet use wider than SM. Problems could arise in which children know more about the technology and these sites than their parents. Taking an active role could ensure that these young people are aware of physical support structures should they need them. Additionally, parents who engage in these discussions in a healthy manner may be able to learn about their children. In a power shift scenario, children and young people could teach their parents to use SM, thus fostering a relationship as well as skilling parents with the technology that they enjoy using. Where parents may currently be engaging with SM, however competently, discussions could be held about the purpose(s) and necessity.

What can adolescents take from this research? The reasons for which they use SM belong to them. They may wish to share this or they may wish to keep it to themselves. On the evidence of the current research, it is entirely possible that most adolescents would have had a plethora of experiences, good and bad. It seems as though the process of speaking through said experiences served a purpose for the participants. Knowing why certain actions are more or less valuable, or particular behaviours are more or less anticipated, on SM could place advanced users in a position of power. That is, knowing how to increase social capital through SM could in-turn have an impact on socio-emotional skills away from the computer. On the other hand, a sense of complacency whereby SM existence is sought as a replacement for face-to-face interaction may hinder the development of essential/basic social skills.

Headlines such as Aldridge and Harden (2014), regarding attempted suicide and selfies, become sensationalised in mainstream media. They are indicative of a level of socio-

emotional impact. When word such as ‘selfie’ enter the popular public lexicon, earning the title of ‘Word of the Year 2013’ (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013), such sensationalised stories could spark irrational fear and misunderstanding. The findings above paint a picture of six individuals who are using SM to their own ends. That is not to say all SM users, or all adolescent SM users are, healthy users. But sensationalist evidence (such headlines) needs to be understood in context.

Do we have next generation’s pandemic on the horizon? There was sporadic discussion of topics such as addiction. There was a somewhat more prevalent discussion of various aspects of communication, be it confusion because everyone has pressed enter (John), having to stare at a computer-screen wondering if anyone is there (Mickey), or normal social communication being distorted (Chalky). Further research is required, but it may be pertinent to ensure professions and families are doing as much as they should to ensure healthy social-skills are being developed throughout adolescence.

## 5.5 *Reflexivity*

This section aims to outline my position as a researcher during the research process.

### 5.5.1 *Theoretical Approaches to Reflections*

A helpful way to engage with the reflective process is to use The Gibbs Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988) (see Appendix T). This outlines six-stages of reflection:  
Description - What happened? Feeling - What were you thinking and feeling?  
Evaluation - What was good/bad about the experience? Analysis - What sense can you make of the situation? Conclusion - What else could you have done? Action Plan - If it arose again, what would you do?

The use of this model allows a meta-cognitive view of the overall process. This is akin to the zoom lens analogy used by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) to describe the IPA process. The following is my application of The Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988):

- *Description*: The design and implementation of research with the aim of answering the research question outlined in chapter 2.

- *Feelings:* Throughout the research I experienced many different feelings and emotional states. Broadly speaking, I was excited at the outset and design of the research. I found researching and writing elements of this thesis challenging, rewarding, and insightful. During the data collection stages, I distinctly remember feelings of excitement and creativity. I felt this due to the open-nature and flexibility (interviewing) with which I could collect the data. The data analysis stage was initially overwhelming due to the amount of data. This eventually led to feelings of achievement and excitement when nearing the end of the analytic cycle. Towards the end of the writing stage I began to feel a sense of resolution. This was a satisfying sense given the completion of the research but also had an element of grief at the loss of the research process.
- *Evaluation:* I would like to say that my exploration of SM as a phenomenon for these participants was emic in nature. I would have relished the opportunity for the participants to be able to engage with the phenomenon in some way prior to, or during, the interview process. The interview and analytic process were my opportunities to make sense of the experience for each participant. I am glad I used pilot interview (Robson, 2011), I feel that this helped me to place as great an emphasis as possible on the data collection and analysis phases. I feel that more interview practise may have been beneficial for the overall process.
- *Analysis:* I feel that the openness with which I approached the interviews and the design of the research as an exploration emphasised the content of the interviews. The literature, which employed top down techniques, made assumptions that did not allow for the understanding of experience I was privileged enough to discover. Though the overall process used only six participants, I was able to elicit six experience-rich accounts of the ways in which adolescents use SM. I thoroughly enjoyed being able to communicate with these adolescents and understand the phenomena in their words.
- *Conclusion:* As explored throughout the research, SM appears to play a role for these participants. It may have been a different experience if the participants had an opportunity to engage with SM to some degree prior to the interview process. This carries with it some difficulties such as the fabricated nature of the experience, the manufactured start and end of the use of SM, and the rules against using mobiles

phones/SM at school. Generally, the participants gave a rich account and appeared to be open to the idea of a discussion about their use of SM.

- *Action Plan:* I am presenting this research at a UEL conference and a conference hosted by my psychology service. I am also planning on submitting for publication to an open-access periodical.

### 5.5.2 Hermeneutics

Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) speak of the hermeneutic cycle as a process through which analysts move between the particular and the whole. As a concept hermeneutics is seemingly simple yet complex in action. I envisaged each participant as a constituency and the various elements of each discussion as the constituent. Thus, the movement between the various constituents and the constituency within which they existed was an enjoyable metaphor I used to help during the analytic process.

Constituents took the role of words, sentences, emphasis, as well as the unsaid content of a response. I tried to bracket the analytic process for each participant by allowing time between the analyses of each transcript. Of course, it is impossible to not be influenced by our perceived knowledge throughout this process (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). However, I feel the analytic transcripts (see Appendix R) show explicit reference to where ideas and thoughts come from, as well as the development of themes. As mentioned previously, these were shared with other EPs for validity.

By the virtue of my role as a TEP and my involvement and the work that this entails, the hermeneutic process was initiated at the interview stage. As I engaged with each of the six participants, attempting to elicit a rich account of their experience of this phenomenon, I followed a particular line of questioning. I had a semi-structured interview planned, but I allowed the participants to take the interview in different directions if they chose. Each participant has had the experience; each participant has some level of understanding of this experience as they attempted to explain this to me. Ultimately, the participants co-constructed the interviews, indirectly co-constructing the resultant themes.

### 5.5.3 Practical Issues in Research

During the time of the research, I was working with an LA as a TEP. My role with the LA meant that I had a responsibility to various schools to deliver services in a time-based model. Given this research was a priority for me but not necessarily for the school within which it took place, I offered the time to complete the research from my own time, as opposed to any LA allocation.

I had an agenda to be present at the school for the purposes of completing interviews for this research. However, as I outlined in the application for ethical approval, my first and foremost priority was the safety and wellbeing of the participants. As such, I followed the guidelines issued by the LA and school alike. During the interview process a disclosure was made. As agreed, I followed the guidelines and made this clear to the participant. I have since followed this up and seen that the school have acted upon the information they were given. I also clarified and completed any necessary actions as required by the ethics committee at UEL.

### 5.5.4 Professional Development

During the research process, I came to learn about the theory and application of IPA as a methodological tool. My initial reading of literature, especially the guidelines by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009), painted IPA as a complex and multifaceted method by which to analyse a conversation. As I became more immersed in the interviews I had conducted, IPA became clearer to me. The role of supervision throughout this process allowed me to see that I could feasibly apply various constituent elements of IPA to enhance my practice as a TEP/EP. I couldn't claim to be an expert, but I feel as though I have gained a valuable set of skills. I feel that this has in turn allowed me to become more adept at listening actively when communicating as a professional.

### 5.5.5 Personal Development

I feel the experiences that I had the distinct privilege of eliciting and distributing has made me more aware of implicit content as well as nuance. The participants shared personal experiences pertaining to their use of SM, shedding light on some of the interests, as well as offering a magnifying glass to the changing nature of child



development. As highlighted previously by Steinberg and Kinchloe (1998), technology is accelerating the way that such landscapes are changing. I feel as though I am better placed to understand this than if I had not completed this research.

Additionally, I feel as though I have refined an existing skill, hearing and understanding the voice of the child (Gersch, Pratt, Nolan & Hooper, 1996).

## 5.6 Conclusions

As outlined in the methodology, this was a piece of exploratory research within a rapidly growing and increasingly advanced area. The use of IPA as a methodological process was helpful in that it allowed the participants to describe their experience with a phenomenon, albeit a reoccurring one. Alongside this, it allowed me to try to make sense of their experience in a rich and person-focussed way.

The findings outlined in this research highlight that SM as a phenomenon is becoming an increasingly important aspect of lives for the participants. Whilst no parallels can be drawn across a wider population of adolescents, it is important to recognise that the findings from the current study helped to understand what we thought we already knew, highlighting how much we do not know. That is, this exploration of what the experiences of adolescents who engaged with SM told us that we still have a lot to understand. Whilst it is likely that a research base in this area will continue to develop, the employment of top-down methodologies seems to imply that we know how and why this population uses SM. The findings have demonstrated a need for more qualitative approaches to understand this from the users themselves, more than from the experts and researchers who may assume that this is the same social interaction, just taking place through a different conduit.

Additionally, it seems as though much of the previous literature in this area was focussed on the negative aspects and experiences of SM. Whilst there may have been particular agendas to these papers, it seems necessary that the adolescent population are understood as to why they seem to be the fastest growing user-based of this technology (OfCOM, 2013). It was highlighted in this research that we have only just started to scratch the surface.

### 5.6.1 Areas for Further Research

Focus for future research should be on the sense that is being made of the experiences that this population is engaging with, and whether there are implications. It may be useful to understand experience and motivation for SM use, using a particular framework. A bottom-up approach allowing for concepts/frameworks to be mapped to SM use would be beneficial. Given the exploration of established frameworks in the current research, Self Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 1991), Choice Theory (1998a; 1998b), or Social Capital Theory (Berkman and Glass, 2000; Kreuter and Lezin, 2002) could be starting points.

Alternatively, given the multitude of interpretations identified, it could be beneficial to focus on such specific mechanisms with a view to developing an understanding and knowledge base. Research conducted on a grander scale to allow a greater understanding would be useful. This could be done in the form of longitudinal research designs, or by including interviews with parents/carers.

Another effective approach could be to understand SM experience and use across a younger population. This could inform the development and progressive evolution of experience and motivation for younger SM users. Though this could be problematic given the minimum age-requirements for such SM sites. As such, it may be more pertinent to explore the understanding of, beliefs about, and hopes for SM with younger populations. Longitudinal research could be used to see the evolving process of SM use.

As above in section 5.5.1, mapping the extent of impact on development of skills such as social-communication could be helpful. Additionally, mental health conditions such as addiction may become increasingly prevalent if little is done to understand the mechanisms that are creating the sense of addiction.

### 5.6.2 Summary of Key Findings

The aim of the research was to understand the experiences of adolescents in their use of SM. From the findings, eight group superordinate themes seem to be apparent:

*Increased feelings of confidence:* It was felt that this was linked with various feelings of deindividuation, a non-reliance on the use of speech and language skills, and some sense of identity.

*Experiences of loneliness or being unseen:* It seems as though this had a link to the development and protection of self-esteem. There was also a consideration of the importance of conversational etiquette.

*Feelings of control in the use of SM:* Links were made to the various aspects of self-determination theory; there was also a consideration of links between attachment and the omnipresence of SM, and by extension, the Internet.

*Roles and status of different users:* There was also a consideration of this finding in relation to self-determination theory.

*Roles for SM:* There was link between this finding and the use of SM for an element of escapism, considered in light of loci of control.

*Habits and routines:* Links were made between the habits and routines of users in light of social capital theory and the consideration of social currency.

*Efficiency:* Links were made with the habituation of the speed at which information could be distributed, additionally; the sense of friendship adverts was discussed.

*The role of 'like':* There was a link made with self-esteem and proactive behaviour to earn social capital.

### 5.7 Summary of Chapter

In this chapter I gave a commentary of my findings with regard to the psychological underpinnings of my analysis (5.2). By doing this, I created a clear and realistic summary of the connecting the issues outlined by the participants of adolescents' use of SM. This answered the research question given in chapter 2. I also integrated the literature discussed throughout chapter 2 (5.2). I then outlined the limitations within the present research (5.3). After this, I discussed the implications for practitioners and parents (5.4). I made my position within the research explicit though a reflexive

discussion (5.5). Finally, I concluded by offering insight on where I feel research in this area should be directed and summaries of key findings (5.6) and this chapter (5.7).

## Key Messages to Take Away

The qualitative nature of the analysis ensured that the participants were able to share their experiences with me. It is important that we continue to extend our understanding of this phenomenon. The participants showed that they have the understanding, and the motivation, to use SM to their own ends. The interview process allowed the nuance and the proclivity of SM use to rise to the surface; quantitative methodologies can be reductionist. The group themes that were uncovered pronounced these mechanisms and allowed us to see that SM is a useful tool. Given the implications for practitioners, professionals, parents, and young-people, it is imperative that we understand the mechanisms and the purpose they serve.

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## Glossary

<i>#</i>	The ‘#’ symbol in the digital world is recognised as a ‘Hashtag’. This symbol denotes the discussion about a particular topic on popular social media websites like Facebook.
<i>App</i>	see <i>Application</i> .
<i>Application</i>	Refers to a self-contained piece of software designed with a defined set of purposes.
<i>Blocked (access)</i>	Being blocked or denied access pertains to sites such as Facebook and Twitter who allow users to set privacy settings on their profiles that require other users to request access to profile content. Or, request that certain other users do not get access to their profiles.
<i>Data Allowance</i>	Phones / devices with the capacity to connect to the Internet can do so in two ways; 1) Through a Wi-Fi (see <i>Wi-Fi</i> ) connection. 2) Through a telecoms company that will usually give an allocation of data to the user (a data allowance). This is also referred to as a data plan or Internet allowance.
<i>Desktop</i>	A computer suitable for use at an ordinary desk. This can also be referred to as a <i>Desktop Computer</i> or <i>Personal Computer</i> .
<i>Download</i>	Copying (digital information) from one computer system to another, usually over the Internet. (See also <i>Upload</i> ).
<i>End-User</i>	Any person who uses a particular product.
<i>Facebook</i>	A type of social media site.
<i>Follow</i>	The term follow in the world of Twitter, is used in the sense of a verb. It denotes an action similar to ‘friend’ on Facebook whereby a user actively engages with another user with the aim of staying up to date with the user’s actions.
<i>Friend</i>	The term friend is often, in the world of Facebook, used as a verb as well as a noun in the traditional sense. As a verb, it describes the act of becoming friends with another user ‘to friend’. As a noun, in the traditional sense it means to be friends with another, though, as this research describes this paradigm may have shifted.
<i>Friends Reunited</i>	A type of social media site.

<i>Gaming</i>	The word gaming pertains to playing computer games (software). This can be an individual playing alone, against the machine/processor, and / or another individual. The game will often be hosted online (internet based). It can also be a group of individuals playing online together in a similar capacity (against other groups, or a machine/processor, in a virtual gaming space). These interactions might or might not involve communication between them using text-based (typed) messages or the spoken word (through the use of microphones/speakers etc).
<i>Group(s)</i>	Groups are a social space in the virtual world, in this case a particular space that exists on the Facebook website. They can be likened to a room.
<i>Hardware</i>	The physical components of any electronic system (examples include <i>Smartphones</i> , <i>Desktop</i> etc).
<i>Hashtag</i>	see #.
<i>Internet-Enabled</i>	Relates to any device capable of connecting to the Internet.
<i>iPad</i>	see <i>Tablet Device</i> .
<i>Laptop</i>	A computer that is portable and suitable for use whilst travelling.
<i>Like</i>	The term ‘like’ is often used as a verb on Facebook, to ‘like’ another user’s action.
<i>Mobile Phone</i>	A telephone with access to a cellular radio system usable over a wide area.
<i>OfCOM</i>	The Office of Communications (OfCOM), is an independent regulator and competition authority for the United Kingdom based communications industries.
<i>Offline</i>	Not connected to the Internet.
<i>Online</i>	Connected to the Internet.
<i>Personal Computer</i>	Also known as a PC. See also <i>Desktop</i> .
<i>Private Group(s)</i>	A private group is a group/forum/space created within sites such as Facebook where membership can be exclusive or by invitation only. Some of these private groups are visible to non-members who are able to request membership, others can be set such that non-member users would only become aware of its existence because of an invitation from members or a member informing them of its existence.

<i>Profile</i>	The name given to the personal spaces that people create on given social media websites. An active profile would be a profile which is ‘in use’, an inactive profile being one that is not used.
<i>Real-Time</i>	A description of the actual time during which an event occurs. This can also be described as a ‘ <i>Real Time Environment</i> ’.
<i>Real –World</i>	The physical world around us, as opposed to the virtual world.
<i>Short Message Service</i>	see <i>Text Message</i> . Also referred to as SMS.
<i>Sexting</i>	The exchange of sexually explicit pictures and language through a digital medium. This includes through SMS (see <i>Short-Message Service</i> ) as well as SM (see <i>Social Media</i> ).
<i>Smartphone</i>	A mobile phone with the capability to connect to the Internet. (See also <i>Internet-Enabled</i> and <i>Mobile Phone</i> ).
<i>Social Media</i>	For the definition of Social Media as used within this current research, please refer to section (1.4). Social media in popular currency refers to Internet websites / apps which allow ‘users’ to connect with one another. This is with this express purpose of staying up to date with their current affairs, as well as exchanging multimedia (photos / videos etc). This can be a simple 1:1 connection where two friends might share content (photos, videos, thoughts, ideas, or feelings etc) with each other. It could manifest as a one-to-many, or business-to-many connection where an individual or business shares the aforementioned content with many people simultaneously.
<i>Social Media Technology</i>	see <i>Social Media</i> .
<i>Social Networking Sites</i>	see <i>Social Media</i> .
<i>Software</i>	A program and/or other operating information used by a computer.
<i>Survey Monkey</i>	An Internet-based survey/questionnaire portal.
<i>Upload</i>	Transferring (digital information) from one Internet enabled device to another, typically to one that is larger (a server type machine).
<i>Tablet</i>	see <i>Tablet Device</i> .

<i>Tablet Device</i>	Used to describe a mobile device with the capacity to connect to the Internet. The iPad is a type of tablet device; it is a brand name specific to the Apple Inc brand of tablet device. Other companies have created tablet devices (Amazon ‘Kindle’, Samsung ‘Tab’ etc).
<i>Text Message</i>	This is a messaging service designed to allow the transference of text messages between communication systems.
<i>Timeline</i>	A section of a Facebook user’s account that replaces the profile and wall pages and merges them together.
<i>Twitter</i>	A type of social media site.
<i>User(s)</i>	This term is used a reference to anyone who engages with a social media website. These can be individuals and businesses.
<i>Virtual-World</i>	The world that exists through a digital platform/medium (ie; through a computer screen).
<i>Wi-Fi</i>	A facility allowing computers, smartphones and other devices to connect wirelessly to the Internet or each other within a particular area (full form – <i>Wireless Fidelity</i> ).
<i>YouTube</i>	A platform for user uploaded video content.

## **Appendices**

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## Appendix A – Literature Review Search: SM1 & A1 (PsychInfo)

Following my initial reading, as discussed in chapter one, I undertook a more detailed and systematic search. On 7 October 2014, I used the EBSCOHost database. I initially focussed my search on PsycInfo. I developed a list of keywords to search based on the thesaurus in EBSCOHost and the keywords available from some of my early reading. I focussed the first part of my search on generating key papers that were based around Social Media. My initial search term keywords were: *Social Media, Computer Usage, Mass Media, Communications Media, Electronic Communications, Electronic Communication, Online Social, Cyberbullying Networks, Social Interaction, Online Social Interaction, Social Networks, Computer Interaction, Social, Facebook, Facebook Website, Twitter, Twitter Website, Instagram, Tumblr, Tumblr Inc, Flickr, and Google Plus*. I will refer to this list as Social Media 1 (SM1). I also searched these terms under ‘subject’. Given the manner in which the keywords were generated, they seemed valid. I searched across all key terms using an ‘OR’ command, EBSCOHost returned results with any of the keywords used. This search returned 969,859 articles (see Appendix A; arrow 1). I then generated a list of keywords to search or research conducted with adolescents. This list was: *Teen\*, Adolescen\*, Youth, Young People, Child\*, and School Age*. I will refer to this list as Adolescent 1 (A1). As above, these were generated using keywords from initial reading and the EBSCOHost thesaurus. I used an ‘OR’ command once more. This returned 759,854 items (see Appendix A; arrow 2). I combined the searches, SM1 and A1, using an ‘AND’ command. This returned 240,104 items (see Appendix A; arrow 3). Given the volume of items returned, I filtered the search to only return items; *between 2005-2015*, with participant populations that were *adolescents (13-17yrs)*, and had a *qualitative methodology*. This returned 4941 items (see Appendix A; arrow 4). Due to the timescales involved, this was an unfeasible number of times to work with.

## Appendix A – Literature Review Search: SM1 & A1 (PsychInfo)

Literature Search 7/10/14							
EBSCO				EBSCO			
PsychInfo				PsychInfo			
Social Media' Keywords				Adolescents' Keywords			Arrow 2
Search #	Keyword	Returned Items		Search #	Keyword	Returned Items	
1	Social Media	4172		1	Teen*	17095	Search OR (1-6)
2	Computer Usage	761		2	Adolescen*	221906	759854
3	Mass Media	19821		3	Youth	74959	
4	Communications Media	17901		4	Young People	20485	Search OR (7-14)
5	Electronic Communications	3347		5	Child*	633820	0
6	Electronic Communication	3347		6	School Age	19265	
7	Online Social Networks	3142		7	DE Teen*	0	Search OR (1-12)
8	Cyberbullying	615	Search OR (1-22)	8	DE Adolescen*	0	759854
9	Social Interaction	40287	969859	9	DE Youth	0	
10	Online Social Interaction	194		10	DE Young People	0	
11	Social Networks	21275	Search OR (23-44)	11	DE Child*	0	
12	Computer Interaction	8756	24912	12	DE School Age	0	
13	Social	946250					
14	Facebook	1496	Search OR (1-44)				
15	Facebook Website	80	969859				
16	Twitter	633					
17	Twitter Website	30					
18	Instagram	3					
19	Tumblr	1					
20	Tumblr Inc	0					
21	Flickr	62					
22	Google Plus	5					
23	DE Social Media	1119	DE = Subject				
24	DE Computer Usage	326	* - Boolean (any word that starts with given letters)				
25	DE Mass Media	8912					
26	DE Communications Media	2644					
27	DE Electronic Communications	2634					
28	DE Electronic Communication	0					
29	DE Online Social Networks	2983					
30	DE Cyberbullying	432					
31	DE Social Interaction	18677					
32	DE Online Social Interaction	2983					
33	DE Social Networks	7329					
34	DE Computer Interaction	0					
35	DE Social	0					
36	DE Facebook	0	Search AND (all SM & all Adolescent)		Search AND (all SM & all Adolescent)		
37	DE Facebook Website	0	240104		240104		
39	DE Twitter	0	FILTER (year 2005-2015)		INDEX (Location UK)		
39	DE Twitter Website	0	111346		4704		
40	DE Instagram	0	FILTER (age Adolescence)		FILTER (age Adolescence 13-17)		
41	DE Tumblr	0	36337		972		
42	DE Tumblr Inc	0	FILTER (methodology Qualitative)		FILTER (methodology Qualitative)		
43	DE Flickr	0	4941		287		
44	DE Google Plus	0					

## Appendix B – Literature Review Search: SM2 & A2 (PsychInfo)

Literature Search 7/10/14		
EBSCO		EBSCO
PsychInfo		PsychInfo
Social Media' Keywords		Adolescents' Keywords
Search #	Keyword	Returned Items
1	Social Media	4,199
<p>Arrow 1</p> <p>SM AND A 332</p> <p>Filters: Year 2009-2014 197 Peer-Reviewed 144 Adolescence 13-17 89</p> <p>39 of 89 selected to review</p>		

## Appendix C – Literature Review Search: SM2 & A2 (Academic Search Complete & Science Direct)

Literature Search 7/10/14			Literature Search 7/10/14		
EBSCO			EBSCO		
Academic Search Complete			Academic Search Complete		
Social Media' Keywords			Adolescents' Keywords		
Search #	Keyword	Returned Items	Search #	Keyword	Returned Items
1	Social Media	19,168	1	Adolescen*	187,448
Arrow 1		SM AND A 346	Arrow 2		
		Filters: Year 2009-2014 274 Peer-Reviewed 225 Adolescence 13-17 not available - manual sift			
Arrow 3					
		50** of 225 selected to review			
		** This figure still needed to be filtered for Adolescent (13-17 yr old) populations			
Literature Search 7/10/14			Literature Search 7/10/14		
ScienceDirect		ScienceDirect	ScienceDirect		
Social Media' Keywords		Adolescents' Keywords	Adolescents' Keywords		
"Social Media"	AND	"Adolescen*"	"Adolescen*"		
Combined Search:					
37					
20** of 37 selected to review					
		** This figure still needed to be filtered for Adolescent (13-17 yr old) populations			

## Appendix D – Matrix for Initial Reads (72 Papers)

1	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N
2	PsychInfo	Moreno, M. A., Briner, L. R., Williams, A., Brockman, L., Walker, L., & Christakis, D. A.	2010	A content analysis of displayed alcohol references on a social networking web site	Journal of Adolescent Health	47(2)	168-175	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purpose to study older adolescent alcohol references on SM sites.</li> <li>- Study conducted in USA.</li> <li>- 17-20 yr olds.</li> <li>- Content analysis, they concluded that even though alcohol use is illegal at this age the adolescents still posted use on the SM profiles (MySpace).</li> </ul>	N
3	PsychInfo	Blum, R. W., Bastos, F. I. P. M., Kabiru, C., & Le, L. C	2012	Adolescent health in the 21st century	Lancet	379	1567-1568	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overview / Commentary of Adolescent health in the 21st century. Makes reference to SM but little focus on anything specific.</li> </ul>	N
4	PsychInfo	King, D. L., Delfabbro, P. H., Kaptis, D., & Zwaans, T.	2014	Adolescent simulated gambling via digital and social media: An emerging problem	Computers in Human Behavior	31	305-313	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus on gambling through the use of digital tech (inc SM).</li> <li>- Based in Australia (1200 12-17 yr olds).</li> <li>- Lots of adolescents do this.</li> <li>- Where adolescents do this, they are more likely to show signs of pathological gambling.</li> </ul>	N
5	PsychInfo	Anderson-Butcher, D., Lasseigne, A., Ball, A., Brzozowski, M., Lehnert, M., & McCormick, B. L.	2010	Adolescent Weblog Use: Risky or Protective?	Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal	27(1)	63-77	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus on weblogs (not really SM).</li> <li>- Interesting findings, potentially return to this for discussion.</li> <li>- Suggested more research was needed in the area.</li> </ul>	N
6	PsychInfo	Appel, M.	2012	Are heavy users of computer games and social media more computer literate?	Computers & Education	59(4)	1339-1349	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Links between adolescent use of Internet / computers and their computer literacy.</li> <li>- SM use linked with higher computer knowledge.</li> <li>- Relationship linked to decrease in computer use anxiety, not preference to use of computer.</li> </ul>	N

## Appendix D – Matrix for Initial Reads (72 Papers)

1	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N
7	PsychInfo	Landoll, R. R., La Greca, A. M., & Lai, B. S.	2013	Aversive Peer Experiences on Social Networking Sites: Development of the Social Networking-Peer Experiences Questionnaire (SN-PEQ)	Journal of Research on Adolescence	23(4)	695-705	- Development of a questionnaire to gauge adolescent use / experience of SM.	Y
8	PsychInfo	Palasinski, M., Riggs, D., & Allison, L.	2013	Can computer-mediated communication increase adolescents' sexually risky behaviors?	The American Psychologist	68(9)	887	- Focus on 'healthy sexual behaviours' (using protection etc). Apparently risky sexual behaviours are encouraged by generic Internet use (inc SM). - Authors suggest that professionals passing on 'good information' do so through cyberspace.	N
9	PsychInfo	De Ridder, S., & Van Bauwel, S.	2013	Commenting on pictures: Teens negotiating gender and sexualities on social networking sites	Sexualities	16(5-6)	565-586	- Understanding a youth mentality of gender identity through the use of SM. - Findings distinguish between the behaviours based on gender.	Y
10	PsychInfo	Ferguson, C. J., Muñoz, M. E., Garza, A., & Galindo, M.	2014	Concurrent and prospective analyses of peer, television and social media influences on body dissatisfaction, eating disorder symptoms and life satisfaction in adolescent girls	Journal of youth and adolescence	43(1)	p1-14	- 237 Girls. - Purpose to find links between body (dis)satisfaction and TV/SM/peer-influence. - Findings suggest main influence is peer related, more so than TV/SM.	N
11	PsychInfo	Charmaraman, L.	2013	Congregating to create for social change: urban youth media production and sense of community	Learning, Media and Technology	38(1)	102-115	-14 participants (15/19 years old) - After school media production activities used to empower a sense of community.	N
12	PsychInfo	Wicks, R. H., Wicks, J. L., Morimoto, S. A., Maxwell, A., & Schulte, S. R.	2014	Correlates of Political and Civic Engagement Among Youth During the 2012 Presidential Campaign	American Behavioral Scientist	58(5)	622-644	socialization agents that impact on political and civic engagement	N

## Appendix D – Matrix for Initial Reads (72 Papers)

1	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N
13	PsychInfo	Siibak, A., Forsman, M., & Hernwall, P.	2012	Employing Creative Research Methods with Tweens in Estonia and Sweden: Reflections on a Case Study of Identity Construction on Social Networking Sites	Journal of technology in human services	30(3-4)	250-261	paper on the experiences of using creative research methods when conducting research with teenagers in sweden and estonia.	N
14	PsychInfo	Winpenny, E. M., Marteau, T. M., & Nolte, E.	2014	Exposure of Children and Adolescents to Alcohol Marketing on Social Media Websites	Alcohol and Alcoholism	49(2)	154-159	-paper focussed on the exposure to alcohol through the use of SM. -discussion predominantly focussed on the exposure to the adverts.	N
15	PsychInfo	L Hur, J., & Gupta, M.	2013	Growing up in the web of social networking: Adolescent development and social media	Adolescent Psychiatry	3(3)	233-244	- Paper focusses on the development of adolescents in light of tools such as SM. - Also look at other digital mediums.	Y
16	PsychInfo	Cavazos-Rehg, P. A., Krauss, M. J., Spitznagel, E. L., Lowery, A., Grucza, R. A., Chaloupka, F. J., & Bierut, L. J.	2014	Hazards of new media: Youth's exposure to tobacco ads/promotions	Nicotine & Tobacco Research	16(4)	437-444	-paper focussed on the exposure to tobacco through the use of SM. -discussion predominantly focussed on the exposure to the adverts.	N
17	PsychInfo	Williams, A. L., & Merten, M. J.	2011	iFamily: internet and social media technology in the family context	Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal	40(2)	150-170	Focus on use of SM inside and outside of the family. Predominately looking at family wellbeing and the use of SM. Not adolescent focussed	N
18	PsychInfo	Guse, K., Levine, D., Martins, S., Lira, A., Gaarde, J., Westmorland, W., & Gilliam, M.	2012	Interventions using new digital media to improve adolescent sexual health: a systematic review.	Journal of Adolescent Health	51(6)	535-543	systematic review of impact of SM and other media influence in sexual health related interventions	N

## Appendix D – Matrix for Initial Reads (72 Papers)

1	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N
19	PsychInfo	Romer, D., Bagdasarov, Z., & More, E.	2013	Older versus newer media and the well-being of United States youth: results from a national longitudinal panel	Journal of Adolescent Health	52(5)	613-619	Longitudinal study to assess the impact on academic/social/mental health of television/internet/videogames & book reading	N
20	PsychInfo	Best, P., Manktelow, R., & Taylor, B.	2014	Online communication, social media and adolescent wellbeing: A systematic narrative review	Children and Youth Services Review	41	27-36	systematic review of literature of social media impact on mental health & wellbeing	Y
21	PsychInfo	Huang, G. C., Unger, J. B., Soto, D., Fujimoto, K., Pentz, M. A., Jordan-Marsh, M., & Valente, T. W.	2014	Peer influences: The impact of online and offline friendship networks on adolescent smoking and alcohol use	Journal of Adolescent Health	54(5)	508-514	Long-term impact of SM use and risky health behaviours	N
22	PsychInfo	Vyas, A. N., Landry, M., Schnider, M., Rojas, A. M., & Wood, S. F.	2012	Public health interventions: reaching Latino adolescents via short message service and social media	Journal of medical Internet research	14(4)	31-40	SMS and SM use in targeting Latino adolescents with sexual health programmes	N
23	PsychInfo	Judge, A. M.	2012	'Sexting' among U.S. Adolescents: Psychological and legal perspectives	Harvard Review of Psychiatry	20(2)	86-96	Focus on 'sexting' and the implications on legal and psychological professions. Sexting refers specifically to SMS	N
24	PsychInfo	Henderson, M., Johnson, N., Auld, G.	2013	Silences of ethical practice: Dilemmas for researchers using social media	Education and research evaluation	19(6)	546-560	Discussion about the ethical implications of use of SM by researchers in educational research	N
25	PsychInfo	Allen, K. A., Ryan, T., Gray D. L., McInerney, D. M., Waters, L.	2014	Social media use and social connectedness in adolescents: The positives and the potential pitfalls	The Australian Educational and Developmental Psychologist	31(1)	18-31	Systematic lit review of SM use amongst adolescents. Focus on 3-areas of 'adolescent development': sense of belonging, psychosocial wellbeing, & identity development and processes	Y
26	PsychInfo	Becker, A. E., Fay, K. E., Agnew-Blais, J., Khan, A. N., Striegel-Moore, R. H., Gilman, S. E.	2011	Social network media exposure and adolescent eating pathology in Fiji	The British Journal of Psychiatry	198(1)	43-50	Exploration of 'mass-media' effect on eating behaviours. Mass media includes but not limited to SM.	N



## Appendix D – Matrix for Initial Reads (72 Papers)

1	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N
27	PsychInfo	McCartney, P. R.,	2012	Social networking safety for children and adolescents	The American Journal of Maternal/Child Nursing	37(1)	65	Nurses investigated SM use amongst adolescents with purpose of teaching parents / children the safe use of SM	Y
28	PsychInfo	Alloway, T. P., Horton, J., Alloway, R. G., Dawson, C.,	2013	Social networking sites and cognitive abilities: Do they make you smarter?	Computers and Education	63	p10-16	investigation of SM use and impact on cognitive abilities and social connectedness.	Y
29	PsychInfo	Ekström, M., Olsson, T., Shehata, A.,	2014	Spaces for public orientation? Longitudinal effects of Internet use in adolescence	Information, Communication & Society	17(2)	168-183	Discussion about the impact of internet use with adolescent development in 'social spaces'. Focus on development of political socialisation.	N
30	PsychInfo	Lam, C. G., Roter, D. L., Cohen K. J.,	2013	Survey of quality, readability, and social reach of websites on osteosarcoma in adolescents	Patient Education and Counseling	90(1)	82-87	Survey of availability and access to resources for adolescents with osteosarcoma	N
31	PsychInfo	Hua, L. L.,	2012	Technology and sexual risky behavior in adolescents	Adolescent Psychiatry	2(3)	221-228	Discussion about the 'sexually risky' behaviours of adolescents through the use of technology. Findings have implications for clinicians	N
32	PsychInfo	Ringrose, J., Harvey, L., Gill, R., Livingstone, S.,	2013	Teen girls, sexual double standards and 'sexting': Gendered value in digital image exchange	Feminist Theory	14(3)	305-323	Focus on 'sexting' and the double standards that exist between boys and girls engaging in these activities.	N
33	PsychInfo	Evans, S.,	2014	The challenge and potential danger of the digital age: Young people and the Internet	Transactional Analysis Journal	44(2)	152-166	Young people's use of cyberspace and the impact on their development	N
34	PsychInfo	Apaolaza, V., Hartmann, P., Medina, E., Barrutia, J. M., Echebarria, C.,	2013	The relationship between socializing on the Spanish online networking site Tuenti and teenagers' subjective wellbeing: The roles of self-esteem and loneliness	Computers in Human Behavior	29(4)	1282-1289	Role of use of 'Tuenti' and subjective wellbeing - based in Spain.	N

## Appendix D – Matrix for Initial Reads (72 Papers)

1	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N
35	PsychInfo	Pujazon-Zazik, M., Park, J. M.,	2010	To tweet, or not to tweet: Gender differences and potential positive and negative health outcomes of adolescents' social Internet use	American Journal of Men's Health	4(1)	77-85	Review of adolescent use of SM, gender differences in SM and positive and negative health outcomes in SM.	Y
36	PsychInfo	Davis, K., James, C.,	2013	Tweens' conceptions of privacy online: Implications for educators	Learning, Media and Technology	38(1)	p4-25	Discussion of 'tweens' (middle-school children), understanding of online privacy. Discussions around strategies used to seek/keep privacy.	N
37	PsychInfo	Seidenberg, A. B., Rodgers, E. J., Rees, V. W., Conolly, G. N.,	2012	Youth access, creation, and content of smokeless tobacco ('dip') videos in social media	Journal of Adolescent Health	50(4)	334-338	Focus on white male adolescent use of 'smokeless' tobacco.	N
38	PsychInfo	Konijn, E. A., Veldhuis, J., Plaisier, X. S.,	2013	YouTube as a research tool: Three approaches	Cyberpsychology, Behaviour, and Social Networking	16(9)	695-701	Experiment using YouTube as a platform for social experiments	N
39	Academic Search Complete	Brown University	2011	AAP Clinical report on Social Media on Youth	Brown University Child and Adolescent Behavior Letter	27(6)	p2-2	Refers to article as cited in 'row 53'	N
40	Academic Search Complete	Lamb, S., Graling, K., Wheeler, E. E.,	2013	Pole-arized' discourse: An analysis of responses to Miley Cyrus's Teen Choice Awards pole dance.	Feminism & Psychology	23(2)	163-183	Focus on 'self-sexualisation' of teenage girls	N
41	Academic Search Complete	Coyne, S., Padilla-Walker, L. M., Fraser, A. M., Fellows, K., Day, D. R.,	2014	"Media Time = Family Time": Positive Media Use in Families with Adolescents	Journal of Research Adolescence	29(5)	663-688	Looking at how families use media in positive ways. The researchers examined relationships between positive adolescent outcomes and diverse media use.	N
42	Academic Search Complete	Elavsky, M. C.,	2013	Activating Ego Engagement through Social Media Integration in the Large Lecture Hall	New Directions for Teaching and Learning	Issue (135)	61-67	Chapter based on 'harnessing' power of social media to help Millennial students 'engage' in the classroom	N
43	Academic Search Complete	Khan, M. L., Wohn, D. Y., Ellison, N. B.,	2014	Actual Friends Matter: An Internet skills perspective on teens' informal academic collaboration on Facebook.	Computers & Education	79	138-147	Exploration of factors that impact of 'academic collaboration' between adolescents on FB.	Y

## Appendix D – Matrix for Initial Reads (72 Papers)

1	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N
44	Academic Search Complete	Foss, E., Druin, A., Yip, J., Ford, W., Golub, E., Hutchinson, H.,	2013	Adolescent Search Roles	Journal of American Society for Information Science and Technology	64(1)	173-189	Focus on the use of 'search tools' for adolescents on the Internet	N
45	Academic Search Complete	Wilfred, L. W. F., Yuen, A. H. K.,	2013	Adolescents' risky behaviours: The influence of gender, and parenting style	Computers in Human Behavior	29(6)	2690-2696	Parenting styles and their impact on 'risky' behaviours.	N
46	Academic Search Complete	Dolev-Cohen, M., Barak, A.,	2013	Adolescents' use of Instant Messaging as a means of emotional relief	Computers in Human Behavior	29(1)	58-63	Study focussed on the use of 'Instant Messages' and medium through which adolescents sought support from peers. I'm accessed through SM and non-SM websites	N
47	Academic Search Complete	Srivasta, C., Chardwaj, A.,	2014	Adverse Effects of Online Social Networking on Children and Adolescents	Journal of Indian Association for Child & Adolescent Mental Health	10(2)	80-92	could not locate article - study based in India?	N
48	Academic Search Complete	Bilke-Hentsch, O.,	2012	AS32-03 - Internet Addictive Behavior in childhood and adolescence	European Psychiatry	27	1	Focus on various 'Internet behaviors' which appear to be indicative of clinical addiction.	N
49	Academic Search Complete	Gabarron, E., Serrano, J.A., Wynn, R., Armayones, M.,	2012	Avatars using computer/smartphone mediated communication and social networking in prevention of sexually transmitted diseases among North-Norwegian youngsters	BMC Medical Informatics & Decision Making	12(1)	120-124	Sex education for North-Norwegian youngsters using SM and other social websites	N
50	Academic Search Complete	Hoffman, A.,	2013	Bridging the Divide: Using Culture-Infused Counseling to Enhance Therapeutic Work with Digital Youth	Journal of Infant, Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy	12(2)	118-133	Focus on the important of being culturally sympathetic to adolescent groups when engaging in counselling/therapy. Highlighting the need to use features such as SM.	N
51	Academic Search Complete	Charles, A. S.,	2012	Cell phones: Rule-setting, rule-breaking, and relationships in classrooms	American Secondary Education	40(3)	p4-16	Exploring the rules/regulations around the use of mobile phones in school / the classroom.	N

## Appendix D – Matrix for Initial Reads (72 Papers)

1	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N
52	Academic Search Complete	White, J. W., Hungerford-Kresser, H.,	2014	Character Journaling Through Social Networks	Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy	57(8)	642-654	Discussion around the 'constructivist' capacity of SM to become a tool to engage adolescents with literacy/reading and learning in the classroom environment.	N
53	Academic Search Complete	O'Keeffe, G. S., Clarke-Pearson, K.,	2011	Clinical Report--The Impact of Social Media on Children, Adolescents, and Families	Pediatrics	127(4)	800-804	Use of SM amongst adolescents.	Y
54	Academic Search Complete	Anderson, J., Bresnahan, M., Musatics, C.,	2014	Combating Weight-Based Cyberbullying on Facebook with the Dissenter Effect	Cyberpsychology, Behaviour, and Social Networking	17(5)	281-286	Strategies to reduce weight-based bullying on SM. Dissenter effect was used	N
55	Academic Search Complete	Zhou, Z., Tang, H., Tian, Y., Wei, H., Zhang, F., Morrison, C. M.,	2013	Cyberbullying and its risk factors among Chinese high school students	School Psychology International	34(6)	630-647	Risk-factors associated with cyberbullying and impact on students	N
56	Academic Search Complete	Görzig, A., Frumkin, L. A.,	2013	Cyberbullying experiences on-the-go: When social media can become distressing	Cyberpsychology	7(1)	22-Nov	Comparative study for those who have been cyberbullied online and those who had been cyberbullied online and on mobile devices	N
57	Academic Search Complete	Gui, M., Argentin, G.,	2011	Digital skills of internet natives: Different forms of digital literacy in a random sample of northern Italian high school students	New Media & Society	13(6)	963-980	Discussion about the complexities of trying to measure 'digital literacy'	N
58	Academic Search Complete	Campbell, M. A., Slee, P. T., Spears, B., Butler, D., Kift, S.,	2013	Do cyberbullies suffer too? Cyberbullies' perceptions of the harm they cause to others and to their own mental health	School Psychology International	34(6)	613-629	Discussion about the impact on socio-emotional health of the victims but includes the impact on the bullies.	N
59	Academic Search Complete	Vanderhoven, E., Schellen, T., Valcke, M.,	2014	Educating Teens about the Risks on Social Network Sites. An intervention study in Secondary Education	Comunicar	22(43)	123-131	Discussion about attempts to educate 'teens' on the safe use of SM and social networking. Arguments are that current attempts are not grounded in theory enough.	N

## Appendix D – Matrix for Initial Reads (72 Papers)

1	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N
60	Academic Search Complete	Seligman, S.,	2011	Effects of New Technologies on Child Psychotherapy: Discussion of Clinical Papers from the Conference, "Where the Wired Things Are: Children and Technology in Treatment"	Journal of Infant, Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy	10(4)	422-427	Exploration of using psychptherapies in novel modalities, i.e.; through technological devices / platforms	N
61	Academic Search Complete	Seligman, M.	2011	Facebook: Friend or Faux?	Journal of Infant, Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy	10(4)	415-421	Author's and her peers' reflections on the use and impact of Facebook	N
62	Academic Search Complete	Barnett, M. A., Nichols, M. B., Sonnetag, T. L., Wadian, T. W.,	2013	Factors associated with early adolescents' anticiapted emotional and behavioral responses to ambiguous teases on Facebook	Computers in Human Behavior	29(6)	2225-2229	Examination of the 'emotional' and 'behavioural' reponses and the difference of gender to 'teasing' messages on FB.	N
63	Academic Search Complete	Gordon, I., Leckman, J. F., Berg, D. N.,	2014	From Attachment to Groups: Tapping Into the Neurobiology of Our Interconnectedness	Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Pyschiatry	53(2)	130-132	Mapping the 'brain structures' during bouts of interconnectedness.	N
64	Academic Search Complete	Yang, C., Brown, B. B., Braun, M. T.,	2014	From Facebook to cell calls: Layers of electronic intimacy in college students' interpersonal relationships	New Media & Society	16(1)	p5-23	Studying the development of intimate relationships and the use of FB through this evolving process.	N
65	Science Direct	Logsdon, M. C., Mittelberg, M., Myers, J.,	2014	Use of social media and Internet to obtain health information my rural adolescent mothers	Applied Nursing Research			Examination of the use of Internet and SM by mothers/expectant mothers who need access to good quality health advice.	N
66	Science Direct	Cookingham, L. M., Ryan, G. L.,	2014	The Impact of Social Media on the Sexual and Social Wellness of Adolescents	Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology			Describing the utility and evolving 'social norm' through the use of SM. Focussing on the impact on sexual wellness of adolescents	Y
67	Science Direct	Gebremeskel, R. H., Sessoms, K., Krehnbrink, M., Haney, C. J., Coyne-Beasley, T.,	2014	Social Media Use and Adolescent Risk Taking Behavior	Journal of Adolescent Health	54(2)	s46-s47	could not locate article - study based in Poland.	N

## Appendix D – Matrix for Initial Reads (72 Papers)

1	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N
68	Science Direct	Johnson, K. E., Xie, B., Karadkar, U. P., Stults-Kolehmainen, M., Rew L.,	2014	Social Media Use and Physical Activity: Searching for Opportunities to Connect Adolescents and Older Adults for Health Promotion	Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy	54(2)	s71-s72	could not locate article - study based in Poland.	N
69	Science Direct	Gregg, N., Chang, Y., Todd, R.,	2012	Social Media, Avatars, and Virtual Worlds: Re-imagine an Inclusive Learning Environment for Adolescents and Adults with Literacy Barriers	Procedia Computer Science	14	336-342	Development of an 'e-learning' environment which includes the use of SM.	N
70	Science Direct	Amon, K. L., Campbell, A. J., Hawke, C., Steinbeck, K.,	2014	Facebook as a Recruitment Tool for Adolescent Health Research: A Systematic Review	Academic Pediatrics	14(5)	439-447	Review of literature where participants are recruited through FB	N
71	Science Direct	Cénat, J. M., Hébert, M., Blais, M., Lavoie, F., Guerrier, M., Derivois, D.,	2014	Cyberbullying, psychological distress and self-esteem among youth in Quebec schools	Journal of Affective Disorders	169(1)	p7-9	Study of the prevalence of bullying in schools in Quebec and the impact this has.	N
72	Science Direct	McBride, D. L.,	2011	Risks and Benefits of Social Media for Children and Adolescents	Journal of Pediatric Nursing	26(5)	498-499	Author's views of risks and benefits of SM from existing data	N
73	Science Direct	Pfeiffer, C., Kleeb, M., Mbelwa, A., Ahorlu, C.,	2014	The use of social media among adolescents in Dar es Salaam and Mtwara, Tanzania	Reproductive Health Matters	22(43)	176-186	SM use by 'teenager's in Tanzania, Dar es Salaam.	N
74									
75									
76								Total YES	11
77								Total NO	61
78									
79									
80									



## Appendix E – Matrix for Detailed Reads (11 Papers)

	Article Number	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N	Retrieved Y/N	Kept Y/N	Reason
1	1	PsychInfo	Landoll, R. R., La Greca, A. M., & Lai, B. S.	2013	Aversive Peer Experiences on Social Networking Sites: Development of the Social Networking-Peer Experiences Questionnaire (SN-PEQ)	Journal of Research on Adolescence	23(4)	695-705	- Development of a questionnaire to gauge adolescent use / experience of SM.	Y	Y	Y	Literature review; summary given - conclusions acknowledged
2	2	PsychInfo	De Ridder, S., & Van Bauwel, S.	2013	Commenting on pictures: Teens negotiating gender and sexualities on social networking sites	Sexualities	16(5-6)	565-586	- Understanding a youth mentality of gender identity through the use of SM. - Findings distinguish between the behaviours based on gender.	Y	Y	N	Population has English as Additional Language.
3	3	PsychInfo	L. Hur, J., & Gupta, M.	2013	Growing up in the web of social networking: Adolescent development and social media	Adolescent Psychiatry	3(3)	233-244	- Paper focusses on the development of adolescents in light of tools such as SM. - Also look at other digital mediums.	Y	N	N/A	Unable to obtain due to copyright restrictions.
4	4	PsychInfo	Best, P., Manktelow, R., & Taylor, B.	2014	Online communication, social media and adolescent wellbeing: A systematic narrative review	Children and Youth Services Review	41	27-36	systematic review of literature of social media impact on mental health & wellbeing	Y	Y	Y	Literature review; summary given - conclusions acknowledged
5	5	PsychInfo	Allen, K. A., Ryan, T., Gray D. L., McInerney, D. M., Waters, L.,	2014	Social media use and social connectedness in adolescents: The positives and the potential pitfalls	The Australian Educational and Developmental Psychologist	31(1)	18-31	Systematic lit review of SM use amongst adolescents. Focus on 3-areas of 'adolescent development': sense of belonging, psychosocial wellbeing, & identity development and processes	Y	Y	Y	Literature review; summary given - conclusions acknowledged
6	6	PsychInfo	McCartney, P. R.,	2012	Social networking safety for children and adolescents	The American Journal of Maternal/Child Nursing	37(1)	65	Nurses investigated SM use amongst adolescents with purpose of teaching parents / children the safe use of SM	Y	Y	Y	Summary of some findings with implications for nurses.
7	7	PsychInfo	Alloway, T. P., Horton, J., Alloway, R. G., Dawson, C.,	2013	Social networking sites and cognitive abilities: Do they make you smarter?	Computers and Education	63	p10-16	investigation of SM use and impact on cognitive abilities and social connectedness.	Y	N	N/A	Unable to obtain due to copyright restrictions.
8	8	PsychInfo	Pujazon-Zazik, M., Park, J. M.,	2010	To tweet, or not to tweet: Gender differences and potential positive and negative health outcomes of adolescents' social Internet use	American Journal of Men's Health	4(1)	77-85	Review of adolescent use of SM, gender differences in SM and positive and negative health outcomes in SM.	Y	Y	Y	Literature review; summary given - conclusions acknowledged. Further papers to read identified.
9	9	Academic Search Complete	Khan, M. L., Wohn, D. Y., Ellison, N. B.,	2014	Actual Friends Matter: An Internet skills perspective on teens' informal academic collaboration on Facebook.	Computers & Education	79	138-147	Exploration of factors that impact of 'academic collaboration' between adolescents on FB.	Y	Y	Y	Literature review; summary given - conclusions acknowledged
10													

## Appendix E – Matrix for Detailed Reads (11 Papers)

	Article Number	Database	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N	Retrieved Y/N	Kept Y/N	Reason
1													
11	10	Academic Search Complete	O'Keeffe, G. S., Clarke-Pearson, K.,	2011	Clinical Report--The Impact of Social Media on Children, Adolescents, and Families	Pediatrics	127(4)	800-804	Use of SM amongst adolescents.	Y	Y	Y	Literature review; summary given - conclusions acknowledged
12	11	Science Direct	Cookingham, L. M., Ryan, G. L.,	2014	The Impact of Social Media on the Sexual and Social Wellness of Adolescents	Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology			Describing the utility and evolving 'social norm' through the use of SM. Focussing on the impact on sexual wellness of adolescents	Y	Y	Y	Literature review; summary given - conclusions acknowledged

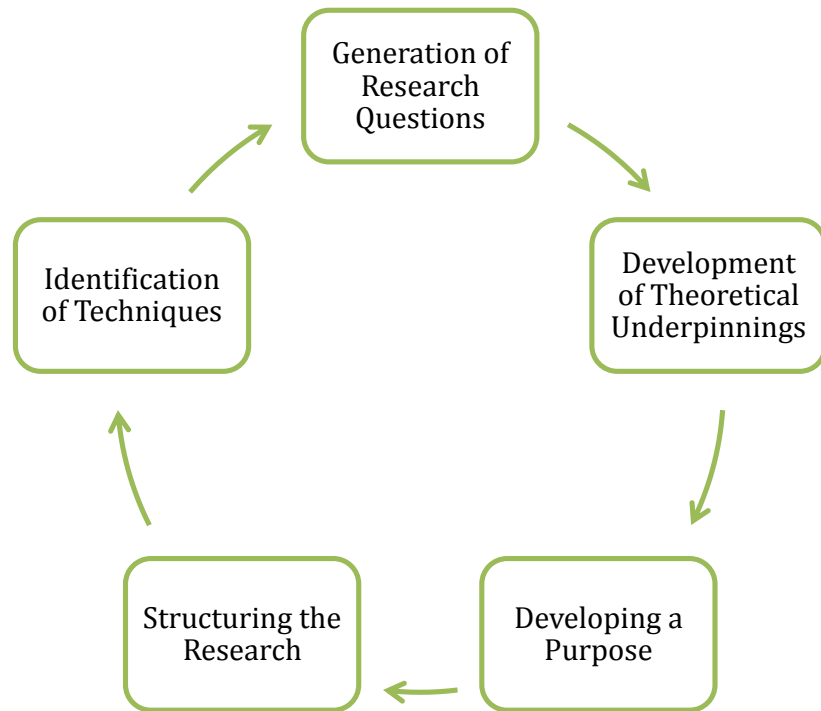


## Appendix F – Matrix for Literature Seen as Appropriate from Detailed Read List (3 Papers)

14	The following articles were identified as relevant from reading in the articles above.												
15													
16	Article Number	Identified from:	Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal	Volume (Issue)	Pages	Summary	Lit Search Y/N	Retrieved Y/N	Kept Y/N	Reason
17	12	8	Kazeniak, A.	2009	Social networks: Facebook takes over top spot, Twitter climbs.	<a href="https://blog.compete.com/2009/02/09/facebook-myspace-twitter-social-network/">https://blog.compete.com/2009/02/09/facebook-myspace-twitter-social-network/</a>			Summary of the most used 'SM/SNSs' as Jan 2009	N	Y	N	Listing of the most frequently used SM / SNS.
18	13	8	Barker, V.	2009	Older adolescents' motivations for social network site use: The influence of gender, group identity, and collective self-esteem.	CyberPsychology & Behavior	12	209-213		N	Y	Y	Literature review; summary given - conclusions acknowledged
19	15	10	Melville, K.	2010	Facebook use associated with depression.	Science a go go scienceagogo.com			Summary of a paper published in 2008 regarding findings related to depression and suicidewhere 'excessive' Facebook use is implicated.	N	Y	N	Summary of a paper published in 2008 regarding findings related to depression and suicide where 'excessive' Facebook use is implicated.
20													
21													
22													
23													
24													
25													
26									Total YES	11	12	9	
27									Total NO	3	2	3	
28									Total N/A	0	0	2	
29													

## Appendix G – The Development of Research

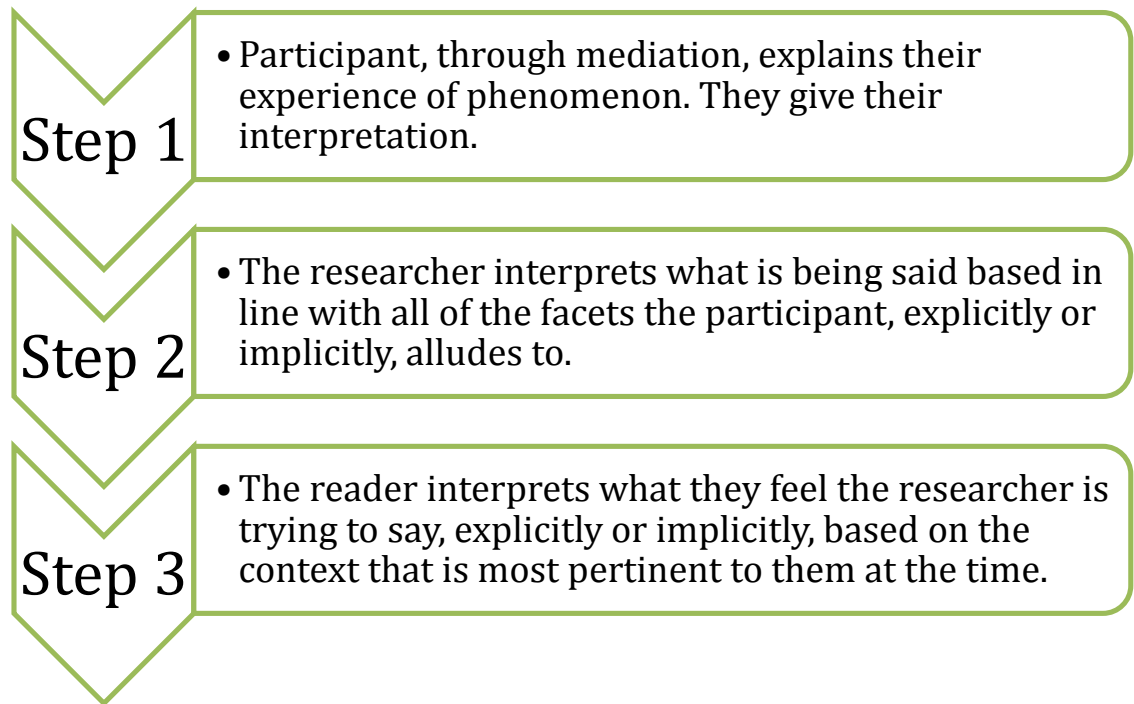
### The Development of Research



Adapted from Fox et al. (2007)

## Appendix H – The Hermeneutic Process

### The Hermeneutic Process



This diagram has been developed based on the ideas in Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009).

## **Appendix I – Interview Schedule (Pre-Pilot)**

Are there times/days when you would use it more/less?

If you were unable to use it, what would happen?

What is the main purpose of using social media / why do you use it?

Do you get bored of it?

Are there any special measures you take when using it / show as invisible to contacts?

Is there something that you can do when you talk to others through social media that you can't do when you're face-to-face?

- Ok other than share pictures/send smileys etc...

How long do you think you could go without using social media?

What happens if you get the urge to use it, but can't...in lesson perhaps?

Are you more/less likely to meet friends face-to-face as a result of social media use?

Do you think that as a result of using social media, you are more/less able to communication in a healthy way with your friends/peers when you do see them face-to-face?

## Appendix J – Interview Schedule (Post-Pilot)

### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Confirmation of time/date

Name – (REAL NAME), in the research the data will be anonymised by the use of a pseudonym, what you like to be called?

How old are you?

Siblings?

Before we begin, may I just confirm that you use ‘social media’ type websites and/or apps for your phone/laptop/ipad?

Thanks.

How you do use it? (laptop/phone/ipad)?

Which websites/apps do you use?

Do you use any one in particular?

When did you start using social media?

Intro: - I’m Sarif, doing research about how teenagers (14-15 yr olds) are using Social media. There are no right or wrong answers; I would like to really get to know what using social media means to you.

I would like you to be as open and as honest as you can about your experiences of using social media. Anything we discuss will be treated with confidence – unless I feel that it could potentially bring harm to you or someone else.

I would like to remind you that this interview will be recorded so that I can really understand what you might be telling me.

Thank you.

You’ve mentioned that you use (NAME of SM website)?

Do you have friends that also use (NAME)?

Do you use it when you’re together? **Where** is this happening? **How** long does that last?

**What** does that look like? **How** do you think (FRIEND) feels?

**How** does friend use it?

**What** does that look like?

**Why** do you think (FRIEND) uses it?

Do all of your friends use it? Think about the ones that don’t, **why** do you think they don’t?

Please tell me a bit about **when** you use it?

**Where** are you / **who else** is with you / **how** long would that usually last?

How do you feel about that?

Anywhere else? And **what** would that look like?

**What** do you think someone (a friend/parent/teacher) would say about **how** you use it?

**What** does that look like? **What** do they see if they see you using it?

**How** do you think social media came about?

**What** do you feel the purpose(s) of social media is/are?

**Why** do your friends use it? **Why** else?

**Why** do you use it? **Why** else?

**Would** other people agree with you? **Why** / **Why not**?

## **Appendix J – Interview Schedule (Post-Pilot)**

Can you think of anything special about social media, which you feel really only exists with social media? Is there something special about it? **What** does that look like?

Has there been a time where you may have wanted to use it, but couldn't. **How** did you feel about that? Has that happened to any one you know? **How** do you think they felt?

Has there been a time where you've used it but are not really sure **why**? Has there been a time when a friend has used it, but doesn't really know **why**? **What** does that look like?

Think of a time, when you feel someone should definitely use it? **What** does that look like?

Think of a time, when you feel someone should definitely not use it? **What** does that look like?

Is there something that you think would be helpful for me to know, that I might not have asked?

Are there any questions that you were expecting?

Are you happy with everything that we have discussed?

Do you have any questions for me?

## Appendix K – Participant Profiles



Gillian Darmody

- Female
- 14 Years Old
- 1 Older Brother
- 1 Younger Sister
- 1 Younger Brother
- Used Twitter for over a Year
- Uses Twitter Daily



Margaret Thompson

- Female
- 14 Years Old
- 2 Younger Brothers
- 1 Younger Sister
- Uses Twitter & Facebook
- Used for 2 / 3 Years
- Uses Daily



John Smith

- Male
- 14 Years Old
- 1 Older Brother
- 1 Older Sister
- 1 Younger Sister
- Used for 2 Years
- Uses Facebook & Twitter
- Uses Daily



Nucky Thompson

- Female
- 14 Years Old
- 5 Older Step-sisters
- Uses Facebook
- Used for 2 Years
- Uses Daily



Mickey Doyle

- Male
- 14 Years Old
- 2 Younger Brothers
- Uses Facebook & Twitter
- Uses Daily



Chalky White

- Male
- 14 Years Old
- 1 Younger Brother
- Uses Facebook
- Used for 2 / 3 Years
- Uses Daily

## Appendix L – School Invitation Letter

Mr Mohammad Sarifuddin Alrai  
c/o X Educational Psychology Service  
X Council  
X  
X  
X

Dear Headteacher

DATE:

Further to our telephone conversation, I am writing to invite your school to contribute to the research I am undertaking as part of my Doctoral research.

The research is aimed at understanding the use of social media type websites, such as Facebook, amongst year 10 students. I have enclosed a copy of the information sheet for your attention.

As this is a rapidly growing area, it is essential that as professionals in the educational sector we are able to understand and therefore meet any needs that may be identified as part of this research.

All that will be required from yourselves is your co-operation to make contact with the parents of your year 10 cohort (in writing), and a room to interview up to 10 participants in the spring term 2014.

I thank you for taking the time to read this letter and look forward to meeting working with you in the near future.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information from me.

Thank you.

Best regards.

Sarif Alrai  
(Trainee Educational Psychologist)  
X Educational Psychology Service  
University of East London, Stratford  
XXXXXXXXXXXX@X.gov.uk  
07702 XXX XXX



## Appendix M – Parent Invitation Letter

Mr Mohammad Sarifuddin Alrai  
c/o X Educational Psychology Service  
X Council  
X  
X  
X

Dear Parent,

DATE:

I am writing to invite your child, **(NAME)**, to take part in a research project. **(NAME)** was randomly selected to take part.

The project I am running is based on the experiences of 14-15 year olds who use online social media (sites like Facebook etc). I am working with a small number of children at your child's school, to contribute to this project, via interviews.

I have enclosed a copy of the information sheet for your attention. I ask that you please complete the tear off slip at the bottom of this page to give your permission for your child to take part this project.

**Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this letter.**

Best regards.  
Thank you.

Sarif Alrai  
(Trainee Educational Psychologist)  
X Educational Psychology Service  
University of East London, Stratford  
XXXXXXXXXXXX@X.gov.uk  
07702 XXX XXX

---

I **give consent** for my child to take part in the research based on the use of social media. Please return this slip to **(NAMED MEMBER OF STAFF)** by **(DATE)**.

CHILD:     \_(NAME)\_\_\_                      CLASS: \_(CLASS)\_\_\_

SIGNED:     \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/carer)

## Appendix N – Participant Invitation Letter

Hello (**NAME**)

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist, at the University of East London, on placement with X Psychology Service.

As part of my training programme I am carrying out a piece of research.

I have enclosed a copy of the information sheet to tell you more about the research, and my contact details if you have any questions about it.

I would like you to help me by taking part. I will be visiting your school between (**DATES**). I would like to ask you some questions about the way that you use online social media websites (such as Facebook, etc).

If you would like to help me, please complete this consent form, I can make a copy of this form for you to keep if you like.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to help you with your research on the use of online social media.

INITIALS: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that I am giving permission for what I say to be used as part of this research.

INITIALS: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that taking part is voluntary.

INITIALS: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that I am allowed to leave the interview at any point.

INITIALS: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that I will be anonymous (no-one will be able to tell that it was me, unless I tell them).

INITIALS: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that (**RESEARCHER**) will need to tell someone what I said if I say something that he feels puts me / someone else in danger.

INITIALS: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that this interview will be recorded for analysis purposes. The recording will be deleted once the data is analysed.

INITIALS: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix O – Participant Information Sheet**

**Who are you?:** My name is Mohammad Sarifuddin Alrai, but everyone calls me Sarif.

**What do you do?:** I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist, at the University of East London, on placement with X Psychology Service.

**Wait, what?:** Well, normally I work with different schools to help understand and meet the needs of the children there...if they have any.

**So what is this research thing all about?:** Well, as part of my training I have to carry out a piece of research that makes a unique contribution to the field of Educational and Child Psychology.

**Title of Research:** #LIKE – What are Adolescents' Experiences of Using Social Media?

**Purpose of Research:** To try and find out why children use social media online. This is to try and identify all of the key factors involved with using sites, such as Facebook, to communicate with those around us. I am interested in seeing if there are any reasons / themes that will help people to understand if/why children are using websites like these.

**Benefits of Research:** The Internet is a fast growing tool. Most of us use it everyday. Many of us use it for websites like Facebook. If children are using these types of websites for any particular reason, understanding that could help educational professionals / schools / parents more aware of anything that they may be able to do to help.

**Will I be paid?:** Unfortunately, I am unable to pay any participants to take part in this research.

**So, why should I help?:** Well, researchers (like me) rely on volunteers to take part in studies (like this one) to help us understand the area that we're studying a little bit better. Your helping could mean that trained professionals/parents are able to help people, similar to you, who might need some support.

**Is it safe?:** The research has been approved by the University of East London's research ethics committee.

**Do I HAVE to take part?:** No. You only take part if you agree to.

**Sounds good. How long will it take?:** The research started around September 2013 and is due to be submitted around May 2015.

**No, I mean how long will it take to help?:** Oh, sorry. The interview will take between 45-50mins.

**This is all very interesting. But I have some more questions, how can I contact you?:**

Sarif Alrai (Trainee Educational Psychologist)  
X Educational Psychology Service  
University of East London, Stratford  
XXXXXXXXXXXX@X.gov.uk

**Thank you.**

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

1 Me: I've just started the recording, (confirming time / date), a (day) morning. I'll start  
2 by introducing myself, I've mentioned this in your permission slip. I'm Sarif a Trainee  
3 Educational Psychologist and I'm doing some research about how teenagers, 14/15 year  
4 olds, are using social media. I'm really hoping to understand what social media means  
5 to you and how you use it. I would like you to be as open and as honest as you can  
6 about your experiences of using social media. Anything we discuss will be treated in  
7 confidence unless I feel it puts you or someone else at risk. If so, I will have to tell a  
8 member of staff who will follow that up. But I will inform you if that is the case. I  
9 would like to remind you that this interview is being recorded. If I say anything that  
10 doesn't make sense or you don't agree with, please feel free to let me know. We can go  
11 through it as many times as we need to. Is that ok?  
12  
13 Gillian: Yeah  
14  
15 Me: Ok, thank you very much. Gillian, as I mentioned earlier all the data I collect will  
16 be anonymised. Is there is particular pseudonym or false name you would like me to  
17 use?  
18  
19 Gillian: any  
20  
21 Interview: ok thanks. How old are you?  
22  
23 Gillian: 14  
24  
25 Me: 14. Do you have any brothers or sisters?  
26  
27 Gillian: Yeah, 2 brothers 1 sister.  
28  
29 Me: older / younger?  
30  
31 Gillian: I got 1 older brother and my little sister is younger and my other brother is  
32 younger.  
33  
34 Me: Excellent. And just before we begin....do you use social media?  
35  
36 Gillian: yeah.  
37  
38 Me: what sites do you use mainly?  
39  
40 Gillian: Twitter, Facebook all of that.  
41  
42 Me: is there one that you use more than the others.  
43  
44 Gillian: Twitter, I use more.  
45  
46 Me: you mostly use Twitter? Great. And how do you access it, which devices?  
47  
48 Gillian: I use it on my laptop and my phone.  
49  
50 Me: Laptop and phone?  
51  
52 Gillian: yeah.

**Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

53  
54 Me: When did you start using it roughly?  
55  
56 Gillian: About a year ago.  
57  
58 Me: how often do you use it?  
59  
60 Gillian: probably everyday.  
61  
62 Me: You've been using Twitter for about a year?  
63  
64 Gillian: yeah  
65  
66 Me: how many tweets have you sent in a year?  
67  
68 Gillian: Don't know  
69  
70 Me: would you say it's a lot?  
71  
72 Gillian: I think probably about a thousand. So kinda.  
73  
74 Me: Would you say you use it quite often?  
75  
76 Gillian: yeah  
77  
78 Me: ok great. You mentioned one of the main sites you use it Twitter, do you use  
79 Facebook as often?  
80  
81 Gillian: not as much  
82  
83 Me: How often would you say you use Facebook compared to Twitter?  
84  
85 Gillian: Not a lot, only really go on it to check birthdays or something.  
86  
87 Me: Ok, so you don't use Facebook a lot, mainly Twitter. Do your friends also use  
88 Twitter?  
89  
90 Gillian: no.  
91  
92 Me: They mainly use?  
93  
94 Gillian: They all use Facebook  
95  
96 Me: They tend to use Facebook. ok, can you tell me a bit about what that might look  
97 like or why that might be the case?  
98  
99 Gillian: Don't know. They all find Twitter boring.  
100  
101 Me: They find it boring, whereas you find it...  
102  
103 Gillian: Interesting.  
104

**Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

105 Me: What's interesting about it?  
106  
107 Gillian: dunno.  
108  
109 Me: what kind of things do you do on Twitter?  
110  
111 Gillian: read other people's tweets.  
112  
113 Me: do you read their tweets more than you tweet yourself?  
114  
115 Gillian: yeah.  
116  
117 Me: are there particular people whose tweets you read?  
118  
119 Gillian: (*inaudibly says*) celebrities  
120  
121 Me: it tends to be celebrities.  
122  
123 Gillian: (*almost whispering*) yeah  
124  
125 Me: do you try and contact them directly with your tweets?  
126  
127 Gillian: no  
128  
129 Me: How comes?  
130  
131 Gillian: well, they've got like millions of people talking to them. So they're not really  
132 going to see me are they!  
133  
134 Me: Ok. And with your friends that do use Twitter, do you chat to them much directly?  
135  
136 Gillian: no  
137  
138 Me: How do you tend to use Twitter throughout the day?  
139  
140 Gillian: What do you mean by that?  
141  
142 Me: Good question. What times of the day do you tend to use it?  
143  
144 Gillian: The afternoon when I leave school.  
145  
146 Me: on your way home?  
147  
148 Gillian: no, when I get home.  
149  
150 Me: ok. What's normally happening at that moment when you're using Twitter?  
151  
152 Gillian: Do you mean like, what am I doing at the time?  
153  
154 Me: yeah.  
155  
156 Gillian: Just, nothing. Just sitting there.

## Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)

157  
158 Me: Just hanging out.  
159  
160 Gillian: yeah  
161  
162 Me: Ok, you would have got home from school, the first thing that you do is....  
163  
164 Gillian: I usually get changed first, and then, (3 sec pause) I do some homework or  
165 something for like 5 minutes, and then go on Twitter.  
166  
167 Me: ok, so you get home from school, you've got changed, you've had a sna(Gillian cuts  
168 in)  
169  
170 Gillian: yeah  
171  
172 Me: you'll do some homework for 5 minutes, and then you're on Twitter?  
173  
174 Gillian: yeah  
175  
176 Me: how long does that last?  
177  
178 Gillian: (3 sec pause, body language and change in tone indicates that she might be  
179 embarrassed) probably until I go to sleep (laughs anxiously).  
180  
181 Me: until you go to sleep. Are you able to put that in a time-frame?  
182  
183 Gillian: (3 sec pause, body language and change in tone indicates that she might be  
184 embarrassed) probably like 4 5 hours (laughs anxiously).  
185  
186 Me: 4 5 hours. ok. around about 4 till 8 or 9 then? or later?  
187  
188 Gillian: yeah. 4.  
189  
190 Me: what's happened in the span of that 4 or 5 hours that you're using Twitter?  
191  
192 Gillian: (3 sec pause) probably nothing. just like scrolling through Twitter.  
193  
194 Me: Just been on Twitter?  
195  
196 Gillian: Yeah and some other social medias.  
197  
198 Me: what are some of the other ones?  
199  
200 Gillian: 'Pollyvor' (pause) 'wattpad'  
201  
202 Me: 'warp pad?'  
203  
204 Gillian: 'Wattpad'  
205  
206 Me: oh, 'Wattpad'  
207  
208 Gillian: yeah, it's like fan fiction. (3 sec pause) and I go on YouTube and Spotify

## Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)

209  
210 Me: is that on your laptop or on your phone?  
211  
212 Gillian: on my laptop.  
213  
214 Me: are you able to do them all at the same time on your laptop?  
215  
216 Gillian: yeah  
217  
218 Me: so you're quite the pro when you're using social media  
219  
220 Gillian: *\*\*nods and smiles\*\**  
221  
222 Me: so you've got home from school, you've got changed, you've had your snack, and  
223 you've started your evening on social media. Are you doing things away from the  
224 computer at the same time?  
225  
226 Gillian: sometimes.  
227  
228 Me: what kinds of things might they be?  
229  
230 Gillian: sometimes like, I go downstairs and just sit there and like talk with my family,  
231 or just do homework at the same time as well.  
232  
233 Me: what's happening at those times?  
234  
235 Gillian: (4 sec pause) because I want to do other stuff, like homework 'coz like i need to  
236 do it for school. But social media is kinda like, addictive.  
237  
238 Me: Ok. That's really interesting. Can you tell me what you mean by addictive?  
239  
240 Gillian: It's like, coz people tweet like, all the time. And you're like...if you follow a  
241 celebrity then you wanna know like what they're tweeting all the time. Or, like, if you're  
242 following loads of them, they're all kinda tweeting and you've got to read everyone's  
243 tweets and that...  
244  
245 Me: you've got to read their tweets?  
246  
247 Gillian: yeah coz like, they're tweeting about stuff. About whatever, but like, they're  
248 trying to tell you stuff. So if you're following them, you read it.  
249  
250 Me: what sort of things would they typically be tweeting about?  
251  
252 Gillian: just what they're doing. or if they're releasing anything new  
253 or...(pauses)...anything.  
254  
255 Me: so are there any celebrities you'd particularly follow or read their tweets more than  
256 others?  
257  
258 Gillian: 'Five Seconds of Summer'  
259



## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

260 Me: 'Five Seconds of Summer', they're a....  
261  
262 Gillian: band.  
263  
264 Me: Sorry, I hadn't heard of them. And you follow them more than you'd follow anyone  
265 else on Twitter?  
266  
267 Gillian: Yeah.  
268  
269 Me: have you ever tried to tweet them directly?  
270  
271 Gillian: No.  
272  
273 Me: how comes?  
274  
275 Gillian: there's no point. They've got so many people contacting them they'll never see  
276 my tweets.  
277  
278 Me: ok, so you tend to follow them, you're listening out for what they're telling their  
279 fans that they're doing....  
280  
281 Gillian: yeah.  
282  
283 Me: and you mentioned the word addictive, what element is addictive?  
284  
285 Gillian: (4 sec pause, whispers) I don't know.  
286  
287 Me: Is there something about what they're tweeting that makes it addictive?  
288  
289 Gillian: kinda.  
290  
291 Me: are you able to say a bit more?  
292  
293 Gillian: like, you're interested so you wanna keep reading.  
294  
295 Me: you're interested in them?  
296  
297 Gillian: yeah. And they use Twitter. I don't really see them anywhere else. They talk to  
298 us on Twitter. So we can be up to date.  
299  
300 Me: Ok. What would happen if you didn't the opportunity to access Twitter?  
301  
302 Gillian: (long pause 5 secs)  
303  
304 Me: let's focus on Twitter because you said you use that one more than the others.  
305  
306 Gillian: yeah.  
307  
308 Me: Is Twitter always running in the background?  
309  
310 Gillian: yeah. It's on and I just come back to it whenever.  
311

## Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)

312 Me: what would happen if you didn't have access to it?  
313  
314 Gillian: (3 sec pause, *body language and change in tone indicates that she might be*  
315 *embarrassed*) I'd probably just go on the other ones.  
316  
317 Me: you'd go on the others?  
318  
319 Gillian: yeah.  
320  
321 Me: let's imagine you didn't have access to any of them.  
322  
323 Gillian: (4 sec pause, noticeably quieter) I don't know.  
324  
325 Me: has it happened before?  
326  
327 Gillian: yeah, like when we've had power cuts, so we don't have Internet.  
328  
329 Me: ok, so what have you typically done at that time?  
330  
331 Gillian: Nothing. Just been bored.  
332  
333 Me: Is there anything that you could do?  
334  
335 Gillian: Sometimes I read a book.  
336  
337 Me: ok.  
338  
339 Gillian: but not always.  
340  
341 Me: where would you typically be using social media?  
342  
343 Gillian: in my bedroom  
344  
345 Me: where in your room?  
346  
347 Gillian: half the time I'm at my desk half the time on the bed.  
348  
349 Me: what would that depend on?  
350  
351 Gillian: I don't know. Just randomly.  
352  
353 Me: ok, so half and half.  
354  
355 Gillian: yeah.  
356  
357 Me: ok, so I've opened the door and I can see you sat at your desk, using Twitter, some  
358 of the other tabs open. You're switching between them, you're following Five Seconds  
359 of Summer, some of their tweets. What would I see you doing?  
360  
361 Gillian: Just scrolling through some of the recent tweets that I haven't seen yet.  
362

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

363 Me: so you're following through everything that they've posted. And what would you be  
364 doing about those tweets?  
365  
366 Gillian: just looking at it, or if they've like posted a link to something else like a picture  
367 or a video then I'd go on that.  
368  
369 Me: but you've said you wouldn't necessarily tweet them directly. Or, you haven't  
370 tweeted them directly.  
371  
372 Gillian: no.  
373  
374 Me: is there a reason for that?  
375  
376 Gillian: There's not really any point coz like they've got like loads of fans so there's no  
377 point coz they wouldn't see it so.  
378  
379 Me: ok. Imagine you did tweet them, and they responded to you. What would happen  
380 then?  
381  
382 Gillian: I don't know. Not sure. (2 sec pause) Like, I dunno.  
383  
384 Me: let's imagine tonight, you go home, you're sat at your desk, you're on Twitter, Five  
385 seconds of summer put out a tweet that says we want people to tweet us, and we're  
386 going to try and re-tweet or respond to as many people as possible, you think, this is my  
387 opportunity. You send them a tweet, they respond to you. What do you think would  
388 happen next?  
389  
390 Gillian: not sure. I really don't know.  
391  
392 Me: If they did put that out, would you tweet them?  
393  
394 Gillian: probably not  
395  
396 Me: ok. Are you able to say why?  
397  
398 Gillian: I don't know. It's like, they're popular so they can do whatever, but I'm just a  
399 user reading their tweets. They've got like loads of followers all around the world and  
400 stuff, I've just got some. They're kinda like, more powerful.  
401  
402 Me: what does that mean?  
403  
404 Gillian: you can see how many followers you have on Twitter. So if you've got more,  
405 then more people can see you and stuff.  
406  
407 Me: Ok. That's really interesting. Thank you. Let's think about the ways some of your  
408 friends tend to use social media, you mentioned they prefer Facebook. Why do you  
409 think that is?  
410  
411 Gillian: (3 sec pause) I don't know.  
412  
413 Me: what kind of things do they do on Facebook?  
414

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

415 Gillian: They just like, message people, and look at pages of 'Liked'.  
416  
417 Me: are you able to say a bit more about 'liked'?  
418  
419 Gillian: Like, something on Facebook that like, they got like (pause), they got some like  
420 post quotes, or stuff like that and they just follow them to like look at quotes or some  
421 are like fashion pages, and they've got all fashion, and stuff like hair styles and all that.  
422 They're just all different like fan accounts.  
423  
424 Me: ok.  
425  
426 Gillian: (whispers) they're just. (stops)  
427  
428 Me: are they using it the same way as maybe you're using Twitter?  
429  
430 Gillian: yeah  
431  
432 Me: Is it the same thing?  
433  
434 Gillian: (4 sec pause) don't know  
435  
436 Me: are you deliberately staying away from Facebook?  
437  
438 Gillian: (3 sec pause) don't know  
439  
440 Me: in terms of the way that they use it, would you say their use of Facebook and your  
441 use of Twitter are fairly similar?  
442  
443 Gillian: (3 sec pause) yeah  
444  
445 Me: what's similar about them?  
446  
447 Gillian: we both follow people and look at what they're doing, at their different posts.  
448  
449 Me: do you think they would be more likely or less likely to message people, or the  
450 same?  
451  
452 Gillian: probably less likely  
453  
454 Me: why might that be?  
455  
456 Gillian: 'coz like, on different pages you can only like, comment some something, you  
457 can't write direct.  
458  
459 Me: so because Facebook won't let them.  
460  
461 Gillian: yeah  
462  
463 Me: do you think leaving the comment would be the same as tweeting someone?  
464  
465 Gillian: yeah  
466

**Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

467 Me: and do you think they're likely to do that?  
468  
469 Gillian: no, they're more likely to just read the page and stuff.  
470  
471 Me: Do all of your friends use social media?  
472  
473 Gillian: no  
474  
475 Me: the ones who don't, why not?  
476  
477 Gillian: some of them don't like it coz like there's too much drama goes on, on there.  
478 Like, yeah.  
479  
480 Me: can you say a bit more about what you mean by drama  
481  
482 Gillian: like loads of people post stuff and it sometimes causes arguments over it or  
483 something.  
484  
485 Me: what kind of things might they be posting about at the time?  
486  
487 Gillian: (3 sec pause) I don't know  
488  
489 Me: To do with school?  
490  
491 Gillian: no probably about themselves.  
492  
493 Me: so they'd post things about themselves, and that would cause difficulties...  
494  
495 Gillian: sometimes, coz like on Facebook you can post your location, and like  
496 sometimes if says like, they can't do something, they're busy, and then they've posted,  
497 then they've gone out somewhere, then that would cause an argument.  
498  
499 Me: How would you describe that?  
500  
501 Gillian: I guess it's lying really. But like, most people might just be like tired or  
502 something. Or they don't want to do that thing.  
503  
504 Me: Does this happen a lot?  
505  
506 Gillian: yeah, most the drama is about lying and all that.  
507  
508 Me: how often does that happen?  
509  
510 Gillian: quite a lot.  
511  
512 Me: In what ways? There's the location thing....  
513  
514 Gillian: I think like relationships or something, like someone could get jealous, and that  
515 causes arguments a lot.  
516  
517 Me: In what type of relationships?  
518

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

519 Gillian: what do you mean?  
520  
521 Me: like in friendship type relationships?  
522  
523 Gillian: More in boyfriend / girlfriend relationships.  
524  
525 Me: is this on purpose?  
526  
527 Gillian: no, not on purpose.  
528  
529 Me: do you think that the way people use social media, shows an understanding of it,  
530 and they use it in a very deliberate way?  
531  
532 Gillian: (4 sec pause) don't know.  
533  
534 Me: shall I re-ask the question? It was a bit of a clunky question, sorry.  
535  
536 Gillian: yeah  
537  
538 Me: Between you and your friends use social media, do you think there is an  
539 understanding why you use social media?  
540  
541 Gillian: I think so.  
542  
543 Me: are you able to describe that?  
544  
545 Gillian: no.  
546  
547 Me: do you think some of your friends might be able to put it in to words?  
548  
549 Gillian: Dunno.  
550  
551 Me: what about the people around you, your family, if they saw your on social media,  
552 could they explain what you were doing?  
553  
554 Gillian: (whispers) Dunno.  
555  
556 Me: Ok. No problem, thank you. We've talked about a few things, social media being  
557 addictive and an element of lying. Is that fair to say?  
558  
559 Gillian: yeah  
560  
561 Me: What are some of the other things you think happen on social media?  
562  
563 Gillian: (5 sec pause) most people just update what they're up to, post what they're  
564 doing and that.  
565  
566 Me: ok, why do you think they're doing that?  
567  
568 Gillian: Dunno  
569  
570 Me: Is it important?

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

571  
572 Gillian: Dunno  
573  
574 Me: Ok. Let's imagine you were using Twitter, you're having a chat with a friend,  
575 imagine you sent them a message and they didn't respond, what would happen then?  
576  
577 Gillian: I'd just wait until they do (laughs).  
578  
579 Me: Would you try to follow it up?  
580  
581 Gillian: No. I might contact them another way to check if like they're just not  
582 responding or if just because they're not responding on that thing.  
583  
584 Me: So you'd try and work out whether it was what you were asking about, whether  
585 they were busy, or whether they just didn't want to respond to you. Is that fair?  
586  
587 Gillian: yeah.  
588  
589 Me: How do you feel about that?  
590  
591 Gillian: Its kinda like, when you're all there and stuff. Sometimes everyone is talking  
592 and maybe people don't see you or something like, or like hear you or something.  
593 You'd just like, whatever.  
594  
595 Me: what happens then?  
596  
597 Gillian: Then you're like on your own kind of. But they see you or like, they'll respond,  
598 or like you'll see them the next day or something. But you just spend time there, like  
599 you're addicted to Twitter and stuff.  
600  
601 Me: Thinking about the word addictive, and some of the other things like drama, maybe  
602 lying as well, how do you feel about that?  
603  
604 Gillian: don't know.  
605  
606 Me: could someone become addicted?  
607  
608 Gillian: (9 second pause) to Twitter!  
609  
610 Me: why?  
611  
612 Gillian: Coz its there. Like, always on.  
613  
614 Me: if you felt that it was a difficulty would you know what to do about that?  
615  
616 Gillian: (5 sec pause) no. I dunno.  
617  
618 Me: Could you speak with someone?  
619  
620 Gillian: yeah, like I would.  
621  
622 Me: Does Twitter have an impact?

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

623  
624 Gillian: like I guess it's important.  
625  
626 Me: why do you think Twitter exists? or social media exists?  
627  
628 Gillian: communication  
629  
630 Me: is that why you use it?  
631  
632 Gillian: sometimes.  
633  
634 Me: and in the times that you're not using it for communication, why are you using it?  
635  
636 Gillian: to see whats like, what other people are doing around the world or something  
637  
638 Me: is that different to communication?  
639  
640 Gillian: I think so. 'coz it's like communication is from two different people. And then  
641 when you see what other people are up to it's only them posting it, and then you're just  
642 like reading it. Seeing it.  
643  
644 Me: Just to make sure that I understand, your interpretation of Twitter is,  
645 communication on twitter you're having a chat back and forward, or there's at least two  
646 people having a chat back and forward. Otherwise, if you're just posting what you're  
647 doing, and it's going out there, that's not communication, that's.....  
648  
649 Gillian: I don't think it's communication unless they like, (pause) you're both  
650 communicating  
651  
652 Me: is that a type of communication?  
653  
654 Gillian: yeah, but it's kinda different. I don't know how.  
655  
656 Me: would other people agree with you?  
657  
658 Gillian: Dunno.  
659  
660 Me: Is there something special about social media?  
661  
662 Gillian: Um, dunno  
663  
664 Me: should I rephrase that question?  
665  
666 Gillian: yeah  
667  
668 Me: Something that really only exists on social media? Characteristics or features  
669  
670 Gillian: You can like, express yourself more on social media  
671  
672 Me: What do you mean by express yourself?  
673



## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

674 Gillian: Like, (5 sec pause) you can have like backgrounds on like Twitter or Facebook,  
675 like your cover photo or something. You can have it as something you like. And then  
676 like, in real life you might not be able to show that you like that, unless by saying. But  
677 like that way, people could just like see that you like it.  
678  
679 Me: Ok, just so I understand, you're talking about the background image on your twitter  
680 page.  
681  
682 Gillian: Or just photos that you post, and people can like see your stuff and know things  
683 about you, things that you like and stuff.  
684  
685 Me: That's different to how it might happen otherwise...  
686  
687 Gillian: Yeah  
688  
689 Me: Can you say a bit more about why they are useful?  
690  
691 Gillian: Could be a way of like, making friends coz like, if you like, have things in  
692 common, then you could become friends  
693  
694 Me: hmm mmm.....  
695  
696 Gillian: Whereas in real life, by looking at someone you can't really like look at all their  
697 interests and all that.  
698  
699 Me: so it's a way of making friends and, those pictures could show someone some of the  
700 stuff that you're in to...  
701  
702 Gillian: yeah  
703  
704 Me: Are you able to say a bit more?  
705  
706 Gillian: Like, by liking pages or following someone or posting things, or by having  
707 things on your background, it like shows all your interests.  
708  
709 Me: You're saying that more helpful than in real life because....  
710  
711 Gillian: Because, you're more likely to become friends with someone if like, you have  
712 things in common. And by seeing that, you can see if you have things in common or  
713 not. Whereas in real life you can't really like tell what their interests are, without talking  
714 to them.  
715  
716 Me: Is there a barrier around talking to them?  
717  
718 Gillian: (3sec pause) no  
719  
720 Me: Do you think it would be possible to make those friends, those connections if you  
721 didn't have social media?  
722  
723 Gillian: yeah, some of them coz like, some people might be from like a different  
724 country.  
725

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

726 Me: ok.  
727  
728 Gillian: and you wouldn't be able to like contact them  
729  
730 Me: those people from a different country, would you consider them your friends?  
731  
732 Gillian: (3 sec pause) Internet friends  
733  
734 Me: and they're different from...  
735  
736 Gillian: normal friends coz like you don't see them.  
737  
738 Me: can you explain what a friend is?  
739  
740 Gillian: (3 sec pause) someone you can...I dunno, someone you hang around with or  
741 something  
742  
743 Me: and, is a friend someone who you've met face-to-face?  
744  
745 Gillian: doesn't have to be  
746  
747 Me: but it is more likely to be.....  
748  
749 Gillian: yeah  
750  
751 Me: and if you've never met them face-to-face  
752  
753 Gillian: it's like, it's hard to tell like if they're like real or not, unless you've like Skype'd  
754 them or (stops).  
755  
756 Me: What does real mean?  
757  
758 Gillian: Like, coz sometimes people make like fake accounts or something, like, they're  
759 fake. they pretend they're someone else. And then, they're not.  
760  
761 Me: Does that happen a lot?  
762  
763 Gillian: I don't know  
764  
765 Me: How do you feel about that that?  
766  
767 Gillian: Dunno  
768  
769 Me: Ok. Thank you. You mentioned a bit about the pictures helping you identify what  
770 things people are in to, what other features....  
771  
772 Gillian: Well like, if they're from a different country then like it's more interesting, you  
773 could find out more about that country, and different like cultures or things.  
774  
775 Me: Have you had the opportunity to do that?  
776  
777 Gillian: Yeah

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

778  
779 Me: What's happening there, when you're using social media?  
780  
781 Gillian: what do you mean?  
782  
783 Me: Imagine you've spoken to someone in another country, you've found out about their  
784 culture, and so on. What would you call that?  
785  
786 Gillian: Just chatting to people, being interested in them. I guess you're learning about  
787 them, and new places and that.  
788  
789 Me: is that an effective way of learning?  
790  
791 Gillian: yeah.  
792  
793 Me: what makes it effective?  
794  
795 Gillian: I don't know, like, it's more effective learning something from someone who's  
796 like actually there, or something. Like when you're at school, it's just a teacher teaching  
797 you. It's like, coz it's better to learn something, that's like, when they're actually there.  
798  
799 Me: is that missing in your classroom?  
800  
801 Gillian: I think so.  
802  
803 Me: Could you do a lesson over Twitter?  
804  
805 Gillian: yeah (voice noticeably louder)  
806  
807 Me: Would lessons be fun over Twitter?  
808  
809 Gillian: yeah, they would know more stuff, because they're actually there.  
810  
811 Me: which lessons would you do over Twitter?  
812  
813 Gillian: (5 sec pause) probably geography, but I don't do geography  
814  
815 Me: So geography would be done well over Twitter?  
816  
817 Gillian: yeah, coz like you could learn more about like different landmarks, or like  
818 different things. Or, (4 sec pause) I don't know what lesson you do like cultures and  
819 stuff in, or like when you talk about peoples traditions and that.  
820  
821 Me: So lessons that revolve around understand cultures, traditions, and other places?  
822  
823 Gillian: yeah  
824  
825 Me: Could you use Twitter across all lessons?  
826  
827 Gillian: Only some.  
828

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

829 Me: You mentioned earlier about things existing on Twitter, you mentioned the  
830 background and cover images. You said it would be different in real-life. Is there a  
831 different between Gillian when she uses Twitter and Gillian when you talk with her  
832 face-to-face?  
833  
834 Gillian: yeah  
835  
836 Me: What's the difference?  
837  
838 Gillian: I don't know, it's like, more confident on Twitter  
839  
840 Me: How comes?  
841  
842 Gillian: I don't know. It's probably coz like they cant see you.  
843  
844 Me: mmm  
845  
846 Gillian: and if like you do something on Twitter to embarrass yourself then you can just  
847 delete it. Whereas if you did something embarrassing in real-life, you can't like,  
848 (pauses) get rid of it.  
849  
850 Me: Do you think something you've done in real-life will follow you around forever?  
851  
852 Gillian: (3 sec pause) Don't think so.  
853  
854 Me: Something you've done on twitter, does that follow you around forever?  
855  
856 Gillian: no  
857  
858 Me: what about social media wider than Twitter?  
859  
860 Gillian: I don't know.  
861  
862 Me: Is the real-world different to the social media world?  
863  
864 Gillian: yeah  
865  
866 Me: why?  
867  
868 Gillian: (6 sec pause) don't know.  
869  
870 Me: You've mentioned people not being able to see you, and feeling more confident,  
871 what other differences are there?  
872  
873 Gillian: In real life, you've only got the people around you that you can talk to, whereas  
874 on social media you can like talk to like most people in the world, like anywhere around  
875 the world.  
876  
877 Me: Is that a good thing?  
878  
879 Gillian: yeah  
880

**Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

881 Me: What's good about it?  
882  
883 Gillian: You could like (pauses) learn from different things and (pauses) I don't really  
884 know.  
885  
886 Me: That's ok. What other differences were there?  
887  
888 Gillian: I'm not sure.  
889  
890 Me: what are some of the similarities between the real world and social media world?  
891  
892 Gillian: don't know  
893  
894 Me: But you're sure that there's a difference.  
895  
896 Gillian: yeah.  
897  
898 Me: Can social media ever be the real world?  
899  
900 Gillian: probably not.  
901  
902 Me: you don't think social media can be the real world.  
903  
904 Gillian: no.  
905  
906 Me: Do you think things that you do on social media have an impact in the real world?  
907  
908 Gillian: Sometimes  
909  
910 Me: Can you think of what some of those things might be?  
911  
912 Gillian: Dunno  
913  
914 Me: What about the things that don't have an impact the real world?  
915  
916 Gillian: probably most things.  
917  
918 Me: can you name a few?  
919  
920 Gillian: If you just like, follow, or like something, it wouldn't really like change  
921 anything or anything  
922  
923 Me: so when you follow someone, or if you like something on social media that doesn't  
924 really have an impact in the real world?  
925  
926 Gillian: no  
927  
928 Me: what about some of the other things that you do?  
929  
930 Gillian: (3 sec pause) um, (4 sec pause) don't know  
931  
932 Me: Let's imagine you were messaging someone because you like the same picture....

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

933  
934 Gillian: you could become friends if you weren't already friends in real-life  
935  
936 Me: what impact would that have on some of the things you said earlier, like  
937 confidence?  
938  
939 Gillian: dunno  
940  
941 Me: Is there a link?  
942  
943 Gillian: Not sure. Dunno.  
944  
945 Me: Do many other people in your family use twitter?  
946  
947 Gillian: No  
948  
949 Me: How do you feel about that?  
950  
951 Gillian: ok.  
952  
953 Me: How comes?  
954  
955 Gillian: Not sure.  
956  
957 Me: Thinking about you teachers and school, what about them on Twitter?  
958  
959 Gillian: I think they'd find more about you. And they might be able to change the  
960 lesson, to like, suit you.  
961  
962 Me: Can you say a bit more about that?  
963  
964 Gillian: like, I dunno. If they change the lesson to suit you then you could like, learn  
965 more in lessons, and then...(whispers) yeah.  
966  
967 Me: So you think if your teachers used Twitter and got to know you a bit better, your  
968 lessons would become better?  
969  
970 Gillian: I think so, coz they could like, if you like, post something on social media.  
971 Something like, what you like or don't like about a lesson or something, then the  
972 teachers like, they could change that. Then it could like, suit you more.  
973  
974 Me: Do you think social media is good way for you to give feedback to your teachers  
975 about your lessons?  
976  
977 Gillian: yeah, coz some people, they don't like going up to teachers and talking to them  
978 face-to-face. So that way it'll probably be better doing it, not face-to face.  
979  
980 Me: Is that an option for you at the moment?  
981  
982 Gillian: You can email  
983  
984 Me: Is there a different between emailing something and tweeting it?

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

985  
986 Gillian: Probably not, unless on Twitter you don't like have, your name. Or your photo.  
987  
988 Me: Would that make it easier, if it wasn't your name?  
989  
990 Gillian: I think so, coz some people like (pauses), they don't like saying something to a  
991 teacher or something. Like they're too shy to or something.  
992  
993 Me: You think that could have a positive impact?  
994  
995 Gillian: Yeah, could have.  
996  
997 Me: Whilst using social media, have you ever come to a time where you're not really  
998 sure what you're doing or why you're doing it?  
999  
1000 Gillian: Ummmm, no.  
1001  
1002 Me: Are you always able to justify why you're using social media?  
1003  
1004 Gillian: I think so, yeah  
1005  
1006 Me: Would you be able to explain that to someone else?  
1007  
1008 Gillian: Probably not?  
1009  
1010 Me: Would they understand if you could explain it?  
1011  
1012 Gillian: Some people, coz like most people are like different. It's like, you say you're  
1013 using it to follow people, some people like probably, won't like going on Twitter or  
1014 Facebook and following someone. So then they'd think like, why are you doing that?  
1015 But that's coz they wouldn't like to do it, so they wouldn't understand why.  
1016  
1017 Me: Are there people who are more likely or less likely to use social media?  
1018  
1019 Gillian: yeah  
1020  
1021 Me: There is something about a person that would mean this person is more or less  
1022 likely to use social media.  
1023  
1024 Gillian: I think so, like, I dunno. I think so.  
1025  
1026 Me: ok. Can you think of what some of those things might be?  
1027  
1028 Gillian: like, if someone is interested in, like certain things...they can go on social media  
1029 and follow a thing about what they like.  
1030  
1031 Me: Is that about wanting to know about a specific thing?  
1032  
1033 Gillian: yeah  
1034  
1035 Me: Are there any other things that would make someone more or less likely to use  
1036 social media?

## **Appendix P – Example Participant Transcript (Participant 1 – Gillian Darmody)**

1037  
1038 Gillian: I'm not sure.  
1039  
1040 Me: Thank you very much Gillian. It's been really interesting speaking with you. I hope  
1041 that's been helpful for you as well. Was there anything that you thought I should ask  
1042 that I haven't asked?  
1043  
1044 Gillian: no  
1045  
1046 Me: was there anything that you were expecting me to ask that I hadn't asked?  
1047  
1048 Gillian: no  
1049  
1050 Me: did I ask any questions that you might not have been expecting?  
1051  
1052 Gillian: (3 sec pause) I don't think so.  
1053  
1054 Me: are you happy with everything that we've discussed?  
1055  
1056 Gillian: yeah  
1057  
1058 Me: do you have any questions for me?  
1059  
1060 Gillian: no  
1061  
1062 Me: Fantastic. Thank you very much Gillian. It's now (time). Are you off to your next  
1063 lesson now?  
1064  
1065 Gillian: Yeah.  
1066  
1067 Me: Ok. Well thank you. Have a great day.  
1068  
1069  
1070  
1071  
1072  
1073  
1074  
1075  
1076 **\*\*NOTE:** Interview with participant number 1, 'Gillian'. Gillian spoke quietly, where I  
1077 repeated her responses I needed to ensure that I had heard her correctly and that the  
1078 recording device had heard / recorded the response.  
1079  
1080



## Appendix Q – Ethical Approval Forms

### SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Dean: Professor Mark N. O. Davies, PhD, CPsychol, CBiol.

**UEL**  
University of  
East London  
[www.uel.ac.uk](http://www.uel.ac.uk)

### School of Psychology Professional Doctorate Programmes

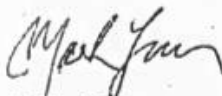
To Whom It May Concern:

This is to confirm that the Professional Doctorate candidate named in the attached ethics approval is conducting research as part of the requirements of the Professional Doctorate programme on which he/she is enrolled.

The Research Ethics Committee of the School of Psychology, University of East London, has approved this candidate's research ethics application and he/she is therefore covered by the University's indemnity insurance policy while conducting the research. This policy should normally cover for any untoward event. The University does not offer 'no fault' cover, so in the event of an untoward occurrence leading to a claim against the institution, the claimant would be obliged to bring an action against the University and seek compensation through the courts.

As the candidate is a student of the University of East London, the University will act as the sponsor of his/her research. UEL will also fund expenses arising from the research, such as photocopying and postage.

Yours faithfully,



Dr. Mark Finn

Chair of the School of Psychology Ethics Sub-Committee

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e-mail: [mno.davies@uel.ac.uk](mailto:mno.davies@uel.ac.uk) web: [www.uel.ac.uk/psychology](http://www.uel.ac.uk/psychology)

The University of East London has campuses at London Docklands and Stratford  
If you have any special access or communication requirements for your visit, please let us know. MINICOM 020 8223 2853



## Appendix Q – Ethical Approval Forms

ETHICAL PRACTICE CHECKLIST (Professional Doctorates)					
<b>SUPERVISOR:</b> Miles Thomas	<b>ASSESSOR:</b> Donald Ridley				
<b>STUDENT:</b> Mohammad Sarifuddin Alrai	<b>DATE (sent to assessor):</b> 18/03/2014				
<b>Proposed research topic:</b> What are Adolescents' Experiences of Using Social Media?					
<b>Course:</b> Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology					
1. Will free and informed consent of participants be obtained?	YES / NO				
2. If there is any deception is it justified?	YES / NO / NA				
3. Will information obtained remain confidential?	YES / NO				
4. Will participants be made aware of their right to withdraw at any time?	YES / NO				
5. Will participants be adequately debriefed?	YES / NO				
6. If this study involves observation does it respect participants' privacy?	YES / NO / NA				
7. If the proposal involves participants whose free and informed consent may be in question (e.g. for reasons of age, mental or emotional incapacity), are they treated ethically?	YES / NO / NA				
8. Is procedure that might cause distress to participants ethical?	YES / NO / NA				
9. If there are inducements to take part in the project is this ethical?	YES / NO / NA				
10. If there are any other ethical issues involved, are they a problem?	YES / NO / NA				
<b>APPROVED</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 10px;">YES</td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 10px;">YES, PENDING MINOR CONDITIONS</td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 10px;">NO</td> </tr> </table>			YES	YES, PENDING MINOR CONDITIONS	NO
YES	YES, PENDING MINOR CONDITIONS	NO			
<b>MINOR CONDITIONS:</b>					
<b>REASONS FOR NON APPROVAL:</b>					
Assessor initials:	Date:				
DR	12/5/14				

## Appendix Q – Ethical Approval Forms

### RESEARCHER RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (BSc/MSc/MA)

**SUPERVISOR:** Miles Thomas

**ASSESSOR:** Donald Ridley

**STUDENT:** Mohammad Sarifuddin Alrai

**DATE (sent to assessor):** 18/03/2014

**Proposed research topic:** What are Adolescents' Experiences of Using Social Media?

**Course:** Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

Would the proposed project expose the researcher to any of the following kinds of hazard?

- |    |  |                 |
|----|--|-----------------|
| 1  | Emotional                              | YES / <u>NO</u> |
| 2. | Physical                               | YES / <u>NO</u> |
| 3. | Other<br>(e.g. health & safety issues) | YES / <u>NO</u> |

If you've answered YES to any of the above please estimate the chance of the researcher being harmed as:  
HIGH / MED / LOW

**APPROVED**

<u>YES</u>	YES, PENDING MINOR CONDITIONS	NO
------------	-------------------------------	----

**MINOR CONDITIONS:**

**REASONS FOR NON APPROVAL:**

**Assessor initials:**

**Date:**

DR

18/3/14

For the attention of the assessor: Please return the completed checklists by e-mail to [ethics.applications@uel.ac.uk](mailto:ethics.applications@uel.ac.uk) within 1 week.

## Appendix R – The Analytic Process for Participant 2; Margaret Thompson

Interview 2 – Margaret Thompson – Analysis (KEY: Descriptive, <i>Linguistic</i> , <u>Conceptual</u> ) (Orange = with discussion / evolution of ideas)		
Line #	Original Transcript	Exploratory Comments
1	Me: I've just started the recording. (confirming time / date), a (day) morning. I'll start by introducing myself, I've mentioned this in your permission slip. I'm Sarif a Trainee Educational Psychologist and I'm doing some research about how teenagers, 14/15 year olds, are using social media. I'm really hoping to understand what social media means to you and how you use it. I would like you to be as open and as honest as you can about your experiences of using social media. Anything we discuss will be treated in confidence unless I feel it puts you or someone else at risk. If so, I will have to tell a member of staff who will follow that up. But I will inform you if that is the case. I would like to remind you that this interview is being recorded. If I say anything that doesn't make sense or you don't agree with, please feel free to let me know. We can go through it as many times as we need to. Is that ok?	My introduction.
3		
5		
7		
9		No preference for alias.
11		
13		
15	Margaret: Yeah.	
17	Me: Excellent. When I do the write up element of the research all the names are going to be anonymised so no one's going to be able to tell it's you. Is there a particular name that you	
18		

## Appendix R – The Analytic Process for Participant 2; Margaret Thompson

19	would like me to use or just whatever?		
21	Margaret: whatever really.		
23	Me: Okay, that's fine. Can I start by asking how old you are?		
25	Margaret: 14.		
27	Me: Do you have any brothers or sisters?		
29	Margaret: Yeah I have two brothers and a sister.		
31	Me: They older? Younger?		
33	Margaret: Younger.		
35	Me: All of them younger?		
37	Margaret: Yeah.		
39	Me: Okay. And just to confirm, you use social media?		
41	Margaret: Yeah.		
43	Me: What sites do you use?		
45	Margaret: Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. That's it.	Margaret's understanding is in line with research.	Use of more than one SM
47	Me: Do you use one more than any of the	No particular preference for which SM.	Use of more than

## Appendix R – The Analytic Process for Participant 2; Margaret Thompson

	others?		one SM
49	Margaret: No, I just kind of...		
51	Me: Do you use them all sort of?		
53	Margaret: Yeah.		
55	Me: Do you think you use them a lot?		
57	Margaret: Sometimes. It depends what I do throughout the rest of the day.	Seems to be a balance between use of SM and things away from the computer.	<del>Balance of use</del> SM use depends on schedule
59	Me: Okay. Cool. Excellent. And when you're using them what device are you using for them?		
62	Margaret: My Kindle.	Accessed through the kindle. Mobile device, portable and 'on-the-go'.	Accessed on mobile device
64	Me: Mainly on your Kindle or only on your Kindle?		
66	Margaret: Yeah, always on my Kindle.	Always on the mobile device.	Accessed on mobile device
68	Me: And how long have you been using social media for?		SM access since before guidelines allowed
70	Margaret: Since I was eleven--twelve.	Margaret has been using social media for over 2 years. Started before the requisite age.	Use SM over 2 yrs
72	Me: Is that, you've been using all of them since you were eleven or have you started using more...		
73			Peer invited to

## Appendix R – The Analytic Process for Participant 2; Margaret Thompson

75	Margaret: It was Facebook first and then I was introduced to the rest of them.	Facebook appeared to be the gateway to other social media.	extend number of SM sites used
77	Me: Who introduced you to the others?		
79	Margaret: Well, my mum's friend's son had Twitter so I got it from there. And then a few of my friends had Tumblr so I just followed.	Twitter was a peer influence. Is she likely to have started using it if this peer didn't introduce it?	Peer invited to extend number of SM sites used
80			
82	Me: And your mum's friend's son has got Twitter. Can you tell me a little bit about how that came about? You found out he had Twitter and he introduced you to it?		
83			
85	Margaret: I think it was when mum saw something about a young girl that had been bullied on social media. So she was mentioning it and then my mum's friend's son said, "Oh well I've got Twitter," and I was like I'll try it out and see how it is.	Mum heard about an instance of bullying occurring on social media. Her peer appeared to be in ear-shot and mentioned his use of Twitter. Margaret then proceeded to start her Twitter life. <u>No mention of mum's response to Margaret extending her use of SM in light of revelations.</u>	Bullying <del>Parent-regulated SM use</del> Peer invited to extend number of SM sites used
86			
87			
89	Me: Okay. So was it the case that he asked you to use it or he invited you to use it or did he just tell you about it?		
90			
92	Margaret: He just mentioned it and I was...try it out.	Peer influence of him using it was enough of a reason for Margaret to start using Twitter.	Peer invited to extend number of SM sites used
92			
94	Me: You thought you'd try it out; it sounded interesting to you?		
96	Margaret: Yeah.	Curiosity / interest got the better of her.	Curious about SM

## Appendix R – The Analytic Process for Participant 2; Margaret Thompson

98	Me: And what was your experience of it? What happened when you used it?		
100	Margaret: It was good. I still use it now sometimes. Nothing bad's happened.	Experience of Twitter appears to be positive enough to continue encouraging her use. Would she still use it if this were not the case?	Positive experience promoting SM use
102	Me: Okay. What do you mean when you say good? What's been good about it?		
104	Margaret: Well I've got to know, 'cause obviously on Twitter you can follow celebrities,	<u>Instant access to information, as when she wants it.</u> Following celebrities – is this the predominant use for Twitter or is this perhaps just the most attractive element of Twitter? What about other sources of celebrity info/updates.	Access to information <del>Instant gratification</del> Exclusive information
105	so I've got to know a bit more about my favourite celebrities without it being in the newspaper or anything.		
106			
108	Me: Are you able to say a little about what kind of things you've been able to find out?		
110	Margaret: I got a bit of a different understanding about celebrities and people in the public eye than what they say in the newspaper.	<u>A development of understanding about the agenda of news in print. 'Different understanding' – does this replace previous understanding or complement it?</u>	SM allows different understanding about people Access to information <del>Exclusive information</del> <del>Information directly from source</del>
111			
113	Me: What kind of different information are you getting from Twitter than you would otherwise from the newspapers?		Access to information Information directly from source
114			
116	Margaret: I think in some stories that you read in the newspaper, it tells them completely differently to what has actually happened so	Margaret's understanding of Twitter is that it allows celebrities to give their version of events. <u>New source's agenda.</u> Has Margaret started to believe Twitter over newspapers? Is Twitter her only source for news / info / gossip?	Exclusive information
117	you kind of get some more understanding of the		SM allows different



## Appendix R – The Analytic Process for Participant 2; Margaret Thompson

119	person's point of view that it actually happened then whatever if you would on the newspaper.		understanding about people
121	Me: Just so I've understood what you're saying, if I'm wrong please feel free to tell me, but would you say it's more of a fair or more		
122	balanced idea of what may have happened about a particular incident or a particular piece of news or do you think it's something else?		
123			
126	Margaret: I think it's a bit more balanced because obviously they might also have lied in what they've said on Twitter to make themselves look a bit better.	<u>Twitter appears to be a balanced version. Though Margaret recognises that celebrities could have lied on Twitter. Why lie? Why not less accusatory?</u>	More balanced information Make themselves look better
127			
129	Me: And thinking about some of the people that you follow, are there specific people or do you follow a different range of people?		
130			
132	Margaret: Well some of them are clothing brands, and then some are my friends, and some are celebrities.	Margaret appears to follow a cross-section of users across Twitter. Is there a difference with the way that she interacts with any of these particular groups/individuals?	Social currency SM used for a purpose
133			
135	Me: And that's specific to Twitter. Is there a different approach when you use Facebook?		<del>Connectedness</del> SM used for a specific purpose
137	Margaret: Facebook's mainly just family and friends.	<u>Facebook appears to be more personal. Purpose of using Facebook and Twitter appear to be different.</u>	Connect with family <del>Parent-regulated SM use</del>
139	Me: And have you done that on purpose, How has that happened?	Initially, Margaret's mother had an influence / role in	Parent regulated SM

## Appendix R – The Analytic Process for Participant 2; Margaret Thompson

141	Margaret: I think it was because when I first got it mum said that I wasn't allowed to add anyone that I didn't know or anyone that she didn't know or that she hadn't heard of.	the way that Margaret used social media (Facebook). Is this still the case? Is Margaret's use of social media still 'monitored/regulated'?	use
144	Me: So how did that evolve to where you are with using Facebook now? Has much changed?	Facebook use has decreased. <u>Was the monitoring / regulation to blame for the decrease in use?</u>	Decline in use of Facebook
147	Margaret: No I don't really use it as much anymore.		
149	Me: Okay. How often would you say you use Facebook?	<i>'Check it everyday' – what's the purpose of this?</i>	SM use is habitual
151	Margaret: Well, I check it everyday but I'm not on it as long as what I am on everything else.	<u>Facebook appears to be a 'secure base' from/to where access to other social media occurs.</u>	Routine
154	Me: If you didn't check Facebook on a particular day would it, what would happen?		
156	Margaret: I wouldn't really care; it's just, part of the routine.	<u>Routine. Facebook appears to be more habitual than necessary. <i>Wouldn't care – Facebook seems disposable. Why / how?</i></u>	Routine SM is disposable
158	Me: So when it's you're using Facebook, what's that about? Why are you using it?		
160	Margaret: I think it's more of a habit. I don't necessarily feel that I have to go on there.	<u>Habit. <i>Doesn't have to go on there.</i> Is there something missing from Facebook that she gets from other social media?</u>	SM use is habitual SM is disposable
162	Me: And is it a habit that you think maybe you can stop doing?	<u>Habitual – not addictive/addiction. Can stop if she</u>	SM is disposable

## Appendix R – The Analytic Process for Participant 2; Margaret Thompson

164	Margaret: Yeah.	wants.	
166	Me: Is there something keeping you doing it?	Why would she need to have tried? <u>Is this a superficial / routine based use?</u>	Routine SM use is habitual SM is disposable Haven't tried to stop
168	Margaret: No I could just stop doing it but...I haven't tried.		
170	Me: You haven't tried. And do you think if you did try it, well how do think you would get on?		
173	Margaret: I think I'd be fine. I'd probably have more of an attention span to other things if I wasn't on there...	<u>Facebook appears to be taking attention from other things even though it is being described as habitual. Facebook sounds pervasive / integral to social media existence.</u>	SM is a distraction <del>Denial of SM impact</del>
174			
176	Me: Okay.		SM is a distraction
178	Margaret: ...than what I would if I was on there.		
180	Me: Okay, and is that a good thing or...?	Better attention span to non-Facebook things seems to be a good thing. <u>Facebook appears to be integral to Margaret's social media use.</u>	
182	Margaret: Yeah, probably.		
184	Me: Okay. What way would it be a good thing? What would it mean for you outside of using Facebook?		
185			
187	Margaret: Well, I probably, like read more books or read other things apart from people's statuses and...	<i>'Reading people's statuses' – is this an admission that there is an element of reading statuses that is not particularly useful? Are the two inversely linked?</i> Facebook use up / reading down.	Facebook use is pervasive
188			
190	Me: Is it a possibility that things like Facebook have stopped you from doing that?	It appears that Facebook is directly related to a lack of	Facebook use is

## Appendix R – The Analytic Process for Participant 2; Margaret Thompson

192	Margaret: In some cases yeah I guess it had.	other activities. <u>This is more than habitual.</u>	pervasive
194	Me: Okay, and in terms of working or connecting with people on other social media. You mentioned Twitter. What's your approach there?		
195			
197	Margaret: Well, it's mainly like when it comes to like tweeting celebrities like if it's a birthday or something. Whereas on Facebook I mention like about my, like how my day's been or stuff's going on.	<u>Different social media appear to have different roles. Twitter is actively communicating non-personal information. Facebook appears to be a communication of person feelings / emotions / information. Facebook perpetuates ego / self. Twitter connects with other making her a 'good person'.</u>	Different SM have different roles Facebook is personal <del>Ego boosting</del> Twitter is non-personal
199			Developing a positive virtual reputation
201	Me: Am I right in thinking that you use Facebook more to talk about yourself and Twitter you use to talk to other people?	Agreement of that idea.	
202			
204	Margaret: Yeah.		Developing a positive virtual reputation
206	Me: Is that, is that a fair assessment, do you think?		
208	Margaret: Yeah.	Agreement of that idea.	
210	Me: Okay. And, who-- these people that you're, connecting to on Twitter, you mentioned some of them are celebrities, some of them are friends...		
211			
213	Margaret: Yeah.		

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215	Me: ...and is there a difference in the way you would try to talk or try to connect with them?	Margaret would communicate with everyone in a similar fashion when using Twitter.	SM use is consistent
218	Margaret: No, not really.		
220	Me: Okay. So, you would directly send messages to celebrities and friends?		
222	Margaret: Yeah, like there's not a lot of my friends that are on Twitter so I mainly use Facebook for when it comes to talking to my friends.	Predominantly uses Facebook to talk to friends, but Twitter is used to talk to / tweet celebrities. Doesn't talk to friends on Twitter because they're not on Twitter.	SM use is consistent Different SM have different roles
223			
225	Me: Okay, so friends and family you were saying on Facebook, that's where you speak to them.		
226		Facebook to talk to friends / family	<del>Different SM have different roles</del> Different SM have different roles
228	Margaret: Yeah.		
230	Me: ...and on Twitter it's celebrities.		
232	Margaret: Yeah.	Twitter to talk to celebrities. Social currency of having communication pathways with celebrities. Is this reciprocated?	<del>Different SM have different roles</del> Different SM have different roles
234	Me: Are there any particular celebrities?		
236	Margaret: [Pause] Like, Little Mix, One Direction...		
238	Me: Okay.	Popular culture. Taste appears to be 'mainstream'.	
240	Margaret: ...stuff like that, singers and that.		

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242	Me: Singers. Okay. Is it important for you to connect with them, do you think?		
244	Margaret: Well, actually I check that like more than what I do Facebook. But I don't always connect with them or send them messages as much as what I do on Facebook to my family and friends. I'm only just...see what's happening and...	Twitter is predominantly passive but has elements of <u>being active. See what's happening, access to information. Different social media have different roles / uses.</u>	Passive use of Twitter Different SM have different roles
246			
248	Me: So, what would be the decision process you would go through before sending a message to someone on Twitter?		
249			
251	Margaret: Well, I would not, I'm not the type of person to send anything horrible to anyone.	Automatic assumption of negative connotation with regards to communication on Twitter.	Bullying <del>Aggressive</del> <del>behaviour on SM</del>
254	Me: Okay.		
256	Margaret: So I'd think of like...I want other people to plan everything anyway. So I'd plan what I was gonna say and then if it was like their birthday or just say happy birthday or if I was like actually having a proper conversation with them, I'd ask how they were and stuff but I haven't actually had a proper conversation with anyone on Twitter.	Not had a 'proper conversation' with anyone on Twitter. What is a proper conversation? The idea of communication on Twitter seems to be hypothetical / strange. <i>What does Margaret mean by plan? Is this different to planning verbal exchanges?</i> Focus on wishing Happy Birthday – is this just to be noticed? Is she important enough to say anything else? <u>Self-worth.</u>	Plan what to say Developing a positive virtual reputation
257			
258			
259			
261	Me: Okay. So you have tried to send a message to them?		Status Developing a positive virtual
263	Margaret: Yeah, but you can only send	Margaret has made an attempt to send a direct message	

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264	messages to people if they're following you and I'm only followed by like friends.	but does not have the requisite status required to be able to send such a message. <i>Margaret is 'only' followed by friends – does she hope that she might be able to send such messages? Status / Role.</i>	reputation
266	Me: Are you referring to direct messages on Twitter?		
268	Margaret: Yeah.	Clarification of direct messages on Twitter, as above.	
270	Me: In terms of sending sort of generic tweets to the other celebrities, have you sent them tweets that they've responded to?		
271			
273	Margaret: There's a few people that do YouTube videos that have responded to my tweets but other than that none of the celebrities have.	<u>There is a ranking system with popular people.</u> The YouTube users have responded but celebrities have not, as yet. What is a celebrity? What denotes that status on Twitter.	Status Not all users are equal
274			
276	Me: Okay, how important do you feel it is that you try and make those connections with those people?		SM is disposable
277			
279	Margaret: Not really important.	Margaret appears blasé regarding importance to contact popular people on Twitter	SM is disposable
281	Me: Okay.		
283	Margaret: Like, I could probably live without doing it.	In any case, Margaret feels like she doesn't need to 'connect' with those people. But she still reads their tweets. <u>Is this a form of connection?</u>	
285	Me: (laughs). Well, my next question was gonna be about perhaps not doing it. You mentioned Facebook was a bit of a habit.		SM use is habitual
286			

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288	Margaret: Yeah.		SM use is habitual Different SM have different roles
290	Me: How would you describe Twitter?		Facebook is replaceable Twitter is irreplaceable
292	Margaret: It's the same but it's more of a habit because I think on Facebook because it's my only friends and family I have other ways of finding out what's going on in their lives whereas, Twitter, I can't really knock on a celebrity's door and ask how they're doing.	<u>Twitter is also described as habitual.</u> Facebook is not a 'big a deal' because of the nature of the people with who she connects with. <u>Margaret relies on Twitter as her own means of connecting with those people.</u> <u>Facebook appears to be less exclusive as methods of contacting these people go.</u>	
294			
295			
297	Me: [laughs] Okay. So there's something about having communication with people in multiple ways.	Facebook is less important because other things (social media or otherwise) can do the job of Facebook. Twitter appears to be the only thing that can do what it does. <u>Exclusivity of feature / contact.</u>	<del>Facebook is replaceable Twitter is irreplaceable</del>
298			
300	Margaret: Yeah.		
302	Me: Okay. Can you describe what a typical day would look like in terms of your use of social media?	Restricted access at school. Doesn't seem particularly phased by this.	Restricted access
303			
305	Margaret: Well I don't use it while I'm at school. It's just at home.		
307	Me: You just use it at home?		SM use is habitual <del>Facebook use is pervasive</del> Routine Up-to-date information Short duration
309	Margaret: Yeah.		
311	Me: Okay. And what does that look like?		
313	Margaret: Well, I quickly check it before school because I normally wake up late anyway so I'm	<i>Quickly check it – seems passive but serves a purpose.</i> <u>Armed with information for school.</u> Is in 'one mad rush' – but still has the need to use social media.	



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314	just in one mad rush.		<del>SM use is habitual</del>
316	Me: Okay.		Routine
318	Margaret: And when I get home it's just, have a quick check through everything.	<i>Quick check once more. What's changed throughout the day? Margaret has just arrived home from school, why is this one a quick check?</i>	Up-to-date information Short duration
321	Me: Okay.		Power
323	Margaret: And then do whatever else I have to do and if I have time later on, I'll check it again.	Social media is not such a priority that it interrupts other activities that Margaret wishes to do. Margaret has the power/choice/control to return to social at will / <u>time permitting.</u>	Control Up-to-date information
326	Me: What do you mean "quick check"?		Content must be interesting Short duration
328	Margaret: I just, like, quickly scroll through everything and if there's anything, sort of catches my eye, I'll read that but other than that there's not really anything.	<u>Something would need to catch Margaret's eye.</u> <i>Reference to quickly using social media once more.</i> What is it about time? Margaret is being selective in her passive use of social media.	
330			
332	Me: Okay, so you'll go online and where would this be?		SM is accessible Open use of SM
334	Margaret: It could be anywhere.	Social media is not a particularly private affair. Margaret appears to be comfortable with the people around her knowing her use of social media.	
336	Me: So it doesn't matter to you who's around when you're using it.		Open use of SM
338	Margaret: Nah, not really.	As above.	
340	Me: Okay, so you've come home from school, let's say you've got your Kindle downstairs in		
341	the living room?		<del>Open use of SM</del>

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343	Margaret: Yeah.		
345	Me: You're on Twitter, you've given a quick		
346	scroll through and it's just an average day in		
346	terms of Twitter feed. What's your next step		
346	then?		
348	Margaret: Probably go on Tumblr and then just		
349	scroll through there and then watch either		
349	Netflix or YouTube.	Once Twitter and Tumblr have not yielded 'interesting enough' communication. Margaret will turn to watching production shows / user-created videos online. There seems to be a focus to be online more than specifically using social media.	<del>Content must be interesting</del> <del>SMA readily accessible</del>
351	Me: Okay. What's average in terms of seeing things on Twitter?		Status Access to information
353	Margaret: Well, it's mainly seeing, like, celebrity statuses. Or, if like, I follow, like,	Margaret's use of Twitter is related to how active the people / brands she follows are. <u>Her use is particularly passive, being guided by the 'powerful / high status' people/brands.</u>	Powerful users influence behaviour
354	newspapers and that, if they've sent, like, a link to the latest newspaper article I'll click on that		
355	and then read through it.		
357	Me: Okay. So that's the average stuff.		
359	Margaret: Yeah.	Average pertains to a regular day on Twitter where those she has followed appear to have had a 'normal day' too.	Powerful users influence behaviour
361	Me: And what about some of the stuff meant that you spent more time than usual going through?		Access to information
364			Social currency
365	Margaret: Like, if something, like, not drastic but big has happened in, like, a celebrity's life	<u>Margaret is likely to pay more attention if a particular event has occurred for the celebrity. If it is out of the ordinary for that people and they are communicating it, Margaret is interested. Social currency / access to information.</u>	Unpredictable duration of use
367	or something then I think or because I follow		

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369	quite a lot of clothing brands If they have like sales and that I'll spend more time looking through.		
371	Me: And that's a special offer that they've got at the time?		
373	Margaret: Yeah.		
374	Me: Okay. What would your decision process be before you decided whether or not to follow someone on Twitter?		
376			
377	Margaret: Well, I'd go for whose, whoever I know them properly first and if I don't know anyone I just won't bother.		
379			
381	Me: Okay, and so that would be, like, your friends...		
383	Margaret: Yeah.		
385	Me: other people?		
387	Margaret: Yeah, mainly, like, my friends and people that I've met at school.		
389	Me: Okay, and who else would these people be that you would need to look through their profile?		
391			
393	Margaret: Well because I, like, sometimes		
		Margaret would only follow people she knows on Twitter. These are people who have 'celebrity-type' status or people she knows away from social media, friends. <u>Margaret is not necessarily using social media to make friends but to better connect with the ones she does have.</u>	Learn about people you know of Social currency
		Margaret has an identified role for social media (Facebook/Twitter).	SM use is consistent
		This is an element of social currency. Margaret's use of <u>Twitter makes her a good people to be seen or associated with online.</u> As such, she is getting follow requests from people she doesn't necessarily know.	Social currency <del>Brand perception</del> Connectedness Popularity

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395	Tweet like my friends, or like, celebrities, people that follow, like, either my friends or celebrities or, like, try and follow me.		Status Profile exclusivity Popularity
398 399	Me: Okay, is there a mechanism that stops them from following you if you don't want them to?	It appears that the people who have made follow requests, Margaret has obliged. <u>Raising her status / profile on Twitter.</u>	
401	Margaret: I think you can block them. Like, there's never been anyone that I had to block so I haven't actually tried.		Don't follow people back <del>Profile exclusivity</del> Power
405	Me: Okay, so you're happy to let whoever on Twitter follow you...	<u>Being followed vs following others: This seems to be another element of where a power balance can exist.</u>	
407	Margaret: Yeah but I don't necessarily follow them back.		Profile exclusivity Power
408	Me: Okay, would there be a difference if you followed them back?	Margaret's profile is hidden; requests must be made to be able to see her profile. <u>This could be about safety / protection given her mother's disposition and understanding of the role/use of social media.</u>	Status Privacy in a public space
410	Margaret: No but...I've...Some of my Twitter profile's private so unless you're following me...you can't actually see anything.		Profile exclusivity Power
413			Social currency
415	Me: Okay, and to do that I would need to ask your permission to follow you.		
416			
417	Margaret: Yeah.		
419	Me: Okay, so imagine you're on Twitter, you've tweeted One Direction. Someone who is also following One Direction, but you don't know,	<u>Margaret gives the impression that she would have to</u>	Anti-stranger Privacy in a public
420			

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422	has asked your permission to follow you. How would you decide?	know someone before any ‘following’ can occur online. Is this a higher level of status, where lay-people can enforce request for their friendships/acquaintanceships with others.	space
424	Margaret: Go through their profile and see whether I actually know them and if I don't know 'em I just ignore them.		Power Status
426			Identity through common interest
428	Me: You just ignore them.	Those who are not worthy are ignored. <u>Status / Power</u>	Connectedness
430	Margaret: Yeah.	<u>Those people ‘she knows’, would be allowed to follow her and she would follow them back. Connectedness / relatedness. A shared sense of social media identity.</u>	
431	Me: and if you did know them?		
433	Margaret: I'd follow them.		Access to information <del>Brand protection</del> Identity through common interests
434	Me: Okay, and thinking about celebrities and clothing brands like you mentioned, how would you decide whether to follow them?	The clothing brands needed to have recommendations from people who Margaret could trust. There is a different amount of understanding depending on whom Margaret is trying to connect with on Twitter.	
437	Margaret: Well, sometimes, like, there's a few clothing brands that, like, my uncle's, like, a big shopper. Like, he knows quite a few clothing brands so I'll ask him or I'll see whether anyone's left, like, any reviews or, like, tweeted them about how good their products were before I followed them back.	<u>Following anyone who is not known is a calculated risk. Is this Margaret protecting her own image to those around her.</u>	
439			Access to special interests
442			
444	Me: Okay. And is it specifically clothing brands or are there other brands that you would follow?	Special interest – clothing brands.	
446	Margaret: No, just specifically clothing brands.		Access to special interests

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449	Me: Okay. What's different about clothing brands?	Clothing appears to be a special interest to Margaret.	<del>Brand protection</del> Access to information Social currency
452	Margaret: I think it's because I'm more in to clothes than what I am anything else.		
454	Me: Okay. Does that mean you wouldn't follow a non-clothing brand-- brand or...?	Margaret is careful to protect her value as a person to be followed on Twitter. <u>Protecting own self-worth, recognising her following someone gives them the status / power.</u>	Learn about people you know of Access to information Social currency
456	Margaret: It depends what their brand is actually, like...about.		
457	Me: Okay, and with the celebrities. What's the process there?	Celebrities would need to pass a similar vetting process to brands. The idea of following this person seems to be based on needing to have prior interest in them. Social media is the platform to allow Margaret to find out more about people she already has an interest in. This is useful information because she has a reason to <u>know about these people – she 'knows' them.</u>	
459	Margaret: Alright say I'm watching, I don't know, a programme on the TV and I see that there's a celebrity that I, like, like one that looks like they have, like, a good personality. I'd see whether I could find them on Twitter and then if I could I'd follow them.		SM use is consistent
461			
464			
466	Me: Okay. And this is the average thing that you'd do when you get home from school?	This is the description of 'regular' social media use.	Routine Content must be interesting
468	Margaret: Yeah.		
469	Me: How long does that last do you think?	However, Twitter / Facebook 'quickly' is done in 20 minutes. Is this due to the passive nature of use? It appears menial/mundane statuses/tweets are brushed over and care is given to the more relevant / exciting tweets.	
471	Margaret: Well, altogether it's probably like twenty minutes because Tumblr, I spend more time on there than what I do anything else.		Different SM have

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473	Me: Okay and what's the difference between Tumblr and Twitter?	Tumblr use is just to look at pictures. There is no room for comments or direct contact. Not social media by current research's definition.	different roles
476	Margaret: Tumblr is just pictures. Like, you can't really add any, like, messages or anything.		
478	Me: Okay, Tumblr is just for pictures...		
480	Margaret: Yeah, photography and quotes and...	Twitter is a combination of messages / pictures.  Facebook is seen to be similar to Twitter in the capacity to complete certain actions.	SM is versatile
482	Me: Okay. Twitter is...		
484	Margaret: Anything, really.		
486	Me: Okay, and Facebook is...	<i>Margaret initially just wanted to try something these out. She now appears to be habitually contracted to engaging with them. It appears she would lose this connectedness if she stopped checking them.</i>	Connectedness <del>Need to exist</del> <del>virtually</del> Curiosity about SM
488	Margaret: Anything, as well.		
490	Me: Okay. Is there a reason that you use loads of different ones?		
491	Margaret: [Pause] No, not really. I think it was because when I first got them I just wanted to try something out.	<u>It appears this necessity to keep engaging with these social media extends from the initial connection which appears to have a profound enough element of usefulness for her.</u>	Routine <del>Need to exist</del> <del>virtually</del>
493	Me: Okay. And once you tried them..		
495	Margaret: I got into the routine of checking them.		
497	Me: Okay. And that's where you're saying you		
499	Me: Okay. And that's where you're saying you		Habit

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501	just fell into the habit...	<u>Habit / ritual / routine.</u>	Acceptable to be different from friends
503	Margaret: Yeah. Me: Do your friends use Facebook, Twitter, those types of social media?	Facebook seems to be the predominant social media that Margaret's friends engage with. Margaret seems to engage mostly with Twitter. <u>What the motivation: access to info vs communicating with friends.</u>	
505	Margaret: Not all of them use Twitter and Tumblr but mainly all of them use Facebook.		SM use is independent
507	Me: Okay, and do you think they use it in the same way as you?	Margaret doesn't really know about her friends' use of social media. Social media use tends not to be a discussion item – <u>the social currency is in the knowledge and content.</u>	
509	Margaret: I don't really know. I can't sort of really think that I know that about them.		
511	Me: Okay. What would your friends' impressions be of the way you use Twitter?	Social media appears not to be an integral part of the interactions that she shares with her peers. Is this because they don't use Twitter and therefore don't care?	SM use is independent
513	Margaret: [Pause] I don't think they really care to be honest.		
515	Me: Okay. Do you talk to your friends about using...		Bullying Experiences are discussed
516	Margaret: Not really. It depends, like, if we've all seen like a newspaper article about some girl or like a boy that'd been bullied we'd like talk about that and then we'd see whether anyone had had any experience with it. If they hadn't then we'd just carry on with our day.	Social media becomes a discussion item when a particular 'interesting' or 'out of the ordinary' event is brought to light. <u>Bullying. It appears that this is a type of 'informal peer supervision' session where Margaret and her peers check-in with each other to ensure safety whilst using social media.</u>	Social protection
517			
520			<del>Bullying</del>



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522	Me: Okay. You mentioned bullying, bullied a couple of times...	<u>Concerns about the monitoring of social media.</u> It appears that Margaret perhaps doesn't feel enough is being done to keep people safe from bullies online?	SM monitoring system insufficient
524	Margaret: Yeah.		
526	Me: ...and I'm just wondering are there maybe some concerns in there?		
527	Margaret: I think, like, some, like, social media should be better monitored than what they actually are.		
529			
531	Me: So, you don't think that there's a good enough monitoring system?	<u>The users (Margaret's peers?) seem to be hiding themselves online whilst using social media. This can / has lead to instances of bullying. Desire for privacy from family / exposed to risk of bullying. Hidden because of language used/ adding 'strangers'. Power / Self-worth? Is this a question of risk / socialisation? Are they 'making friends' or increasing their 'status' as a person to be associated with on social media? Margaret had her family added on her Facebook – her mother is vigilant and checks-in with her to ensure her safety. Safety. Reporting /blocking systems are not widely known/used – issues around bullying &amp; isolation.</u>	SM monitoring system insufficient
533	Margaret: Yeah.		
535	Me: Okay. Are you able to say a bit more about that?		
536	Margaret: Well, like, I feel my friends refuse to add their, like, family on Facebook because of, like, if they, like, swear in their status or, whatever, they've added people that they don't really know. Whereas mine, I have quite a lot of my family on mine. So if I add someone, my mum's the first person to ask who it is. And, as well, like, not everyone knows that there's a blocking system or a reporting system on the social media. So then when they are getting bullied, when they feel like they're getting bullied, they don't really know how to prevent		
537			
538			
539			
540			
543			

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544	Me: Okay. So, is the monitoring to do with the people who developed and maintain Facebook	Margaret has peers who add random people. They make assumptions around these random people's character. <u>Margaret would like a 'better system' to ascertain a truer understanding of who these people are and what they're about. Trust / understanding. It seems as though Margaret feels that trying to develop a relationship over Facebook has difficulties around being able to appropriately make character / safety judgements. Margaret has mentioned the blocking system / bullying a number of times – how salient is to her? is this covered in a PSHE curriculum?</u>	Blocking Protection Safety Learning to be a judge of character
546	or is it to do with the people who use Facebook and people around them?		
547	Margaret: Well, it depends, really. Like, if, like, a few of, there's a few people that I know that add random people on Facebook and they talk to them (pause) and they just say, "Well, they seem nice." I think there should be a way that you could, like, actually see them in a better perspective and see whether actually you do properly know them or whether I think people should get a better understanding about the blocking system and that instead of just ignoring them and letting them carry on.		
550			
551			
553		Facebook developed through boredom. Margaret feels that as people started to use social media, it perpetuated the growth of the phenomena. This means that there are a massive number of people on there and it appears as though Margaret doesn't necessarily like this. <u>Facebook would benefit from fewer users?</u>	Use through boredom Content must be interesting Fewer people should use it  Fewer people should use it
554	Me: Okay, Thank you Margaret. I wanted to ask how do you think things like Facebook and Twitter came about?		
556			
557	Margaret: Well, I think, like, it, like, more people have used them throughout boredom and throughout, like, seeing that people using them. Whereas if it wasn't such a well-known thing and a few people used it I think it would probably benefit more if fewer people used it.		
558			
561			
563	Me: You think Facebook would be better if fewer people used it?		

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565	Margaret: Yeah.	<u>Facebook would be better with fewer users</u>	Protection Safety
567	Me: Is that what you're saying or have I misunderstood?		Compromising user experience
568	Margaret: Or, if I like, fewer people used it and it's all, it wasn't, like [pause] there was a better way of preventing issues happening on there	The number of users makes regulation and protection of users difficult. Fewer users would mean a safer/less issue experience for the users who wish to enjoy Facebook. <u>The 'issues' are compromising the user experience. Why is Margaret still using it then? Incentive? Habit / Ritual?</u>	Others using it in a better way <b>Easier to monitor with less people</b>
569	then more people would use it in a better way than what they do.		
571			
572	Me: Okay, just to clarify. If less people used Facebook it would be better for the people who monitor it because they would have an easier time?		Easier to monitor with less people
574			
576	Margaret: Yeah.		
577	Me: Okay, let's say the same number of people use it as at the moment, what could be done differently?		Protection Safety Blocking Removal mechanisms
579			
580	Margaret: Well, I think there should be more, like, not more of telling off, but more of something happening, if bullying was found out throughout Facebook. Whereas instead of just saying that they've, like, like, emailed them or messaged them saying that they've been reported I think they should, like, close down their Facebook or something so that then there's no chance of them then doing it again.	Margaret feels that there is not enough being done to curtail instances of bullying on Facebook. Margaret has not been a victim of bullying on Facebook – but given her regular / pervasive use of social media, it is apparent that this is a concern for her. <u>Zero tolerance policy on instances of bullying – threat / risk ruining the user experience. This consequence doesn't seem as though it stops the problem – just drives it further underground. Although Margaret feels like it would be a suitable response.</u>	
581			
582			
583			
585			Removal

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587	Me: Okay. Tell me about this reporting?		mechanisms
588	Margaret: I think that the people that are	Facebook seems to have a default <u>audit trail</u> that makes	Blocking
589	monitoring Facebook should say they've found	it possible to investigate reports / instances of bullying	Compromising user
590	out that someone's been reported and should see	and rule breaking. Margaret seems to be allowing the	experience
591	whether it's true and actually go through the	possibility that 'bullying' has occurred unintentionally.	Safety
592	information that they've been given and then if	Margaret feels that the victim needs to be protected and	User regulated
593	it is, just like, get rid of the Facebook account.	perpetrator not told who reported them. <i>Why the focus</i>	monitoring
594	But if it's, like, an accident they should, like, be	<i>on bullying?</i>	
595	given another chance and the person who		
596	reported them should get given, like, a message		
597	or something. But I don't think the person that		
598	reported them should be told to the person that		
599	reported that it was them because then it could		
600	cause more issues.		
601	Me: Okay, Is it a concern for you?		Getting in to trouble
602	Margaret: No, not really because I've never,	Margaret appears to be fixated on bullying and	Safety
603	like, had anything bad happen to me but I think,	instances of bullying (even though she has not been	Users not following
604	like, more younger people that aren't actually at	victim). This is a topic that is salient to her mother	guidelines
605	the age where you're allowed to use it are using	(awareness). Given Margaret's mother used to	Positive experiences
606	it and finding themselves that they're getting	'regulate' her use – it is possible that she is aware of /	but knowledge of
607	into like, not trouble, but bad experiences with	wary of such threat online. <u>Following the rules /</u>	negative experiences
608	it because they haven't actually followed the	<u>Facebook guidelines</u> , not following these rules can lead	
609	rules.	to negative experiences. Is she suggesting that it is the	
610	Me: Okay. Do people use it for the reasons it	victim's fault? <i>'More' younger people (not at right</i>	
611	was created?	<i>age) using it – what is the implication of this? Why the</i>	
612	Margaret: [Pause] I don't actually know the	<i>attraction to it?</i> There is an attraction.	SM use to own ends
613		Margaret doesn't know why social media exists –	
614		suggests that she has a reason/set of reasons why she	

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608	reason it was created but... [laughs]	uses it. Means to her end, not anyone else's.	Keeping in touch User generated social events advertised
609	Me: Fair enough. If you had to guess the reason it was created, what would you say?	<u>Conceptualises the content on Facebook: profiles/pages/events. Profiles allow</u>	User generated
610	Margaret: Probably just to, like, find like, say you've got family that lives in a different country, probably just to talk to them or your friends. Whereas, like, there's, like, Facebook pages and there's, like, like, events pages are good, like... that gives more people a chance to go to the event. Or, as well, there's like, private pages, so only the certain people who are in that page or in that group can actually be on it. I think that's a bad idea because then, say, if they've made a group or a page about someone that they don't like, that person or the person or people that are close to them are never gonna find out about that page.	contact/communication between friends / family separated by distance. Facebook pages – company profiles? Common interest pages? Then there are events pages (public & private) – public ones are 'good' as they allow for connection away from Facebook. Private event pages are bad as they allow a negative propaganda platform against a particular person. This is fine unless the person in question finds out. <u>This can then have detrimental impact on self-worth &amp; relationships. This is similar to playground exclusion in a more sophisticated/auditable and permanent format.</u>	social events hidden SM can be seen as forming cliques
611			
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613			
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617			
618	Me: Am I right in thinking that you've got a concern around the information on social media not being public to everyone?		SM use to own ends <del>Bullying through</del> <del>SM doesn't count</del>
620			Bullying SM <del>doesn't</del> have real-life consequences
621	Margaret: No, not necessarily public, like, there's not really, I don't think a lot of people have a proper understanding of what it's there for. Whereas a lot of people, like, when it comes to being, like, bullied, for instance, they will use, like, the Internet and, like, social media more than what they will actually saying it to someone's face because then they think	Margaret feels that there is a lack of understanding amongst the people who use social media – of its actual use and intention. <u>There appears to be a belief that bullying is less severe/significant/substantial if it occurs online. People will get in 'less trouble' if it happens online whereas you wouldn't bully someone face-to-face. Plausible deniability? If it hasn't happened face-to-face then it hasn't happened? Is Facebook real? Does it mean much? Does this mean</u>	Who actually sets the rules? Bullying through SM taken less seriously
622			
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624			

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625	they'll get into less trouble if they use that	that people feel that Facebook won't do anything about it? Whose Jurisdiction is the Internet?	Preoccupied with negative experiences Compromising user experience
627	face, they'd know that they'd get into trouble.		
628	Me: Okay. Would you say you use it for that purpose that you were describing why it was there?		
630			
631	Margaret: Yeah, like. I nev- I think it's, like, wrong or, like, horrible how people bully that I never bully anyone.	<i>Margaret seems preoccupied with the idea of bullying. Why is it so pervasive? What is it about bullying?</i>	
633			
634	Me: Where you were talking about why Facebook and Twitter and those types of websites were created, you started off saying about connecting talking to people who were far away. Then you mentioned about events and you said that was a good thing, as well. So what's your understanding of why sites like Facebook and Twitter exist?		
635			
636			
638			
639	Margaret: Well, I think it's, like, to connect with family and friends like, regardless of their distance and, as well, it gives people more of a chance to go to the events or to find out about the events.	<i>Social media exists to connect family and friends. It also allows people to advertise events – no mention of celebrity contact. This convenient happenstance has a ritualistic/habitual quality that keeps users engaged with the social media.</i>	Keeping in touch User generated social events advertised Habitual Connectedness <b>Connect with family</b>
640			
642			
644	Me: Okay, and do you think you use social media in that way?		Social engagement because of SM Social currency
646	Margaret: Yeah, like, I've gone to, like, I've taken, like, my family and a few of my friends	Social media has given the opportunity to engage with friends and family away from the computer screen. Margaret uses Facebook to find out about events to	

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648	have gone to the events that they have put on there. And I've spoke to, like, family and friends.	take her family to.	SM use is consistent
650			
652	Me: And do your friends use it in that way as well, do you think?	It appears as though Margaret's friends use Facebook in a similar way.	Social engagement because of SM
655	Margaret: Well, that I know of, yeah.		
657	Me: What do you think other people's opinion of what you think social media is all about?		
658	Margaret: I think they probably just say it gives you a chance to meet new friends.	<i>Other people would have the opportunity to meet new friends – Margaret does not necessarily use it for this purpose.</i>	SM use is independent
660			
662	Me: Okay, and do you think they would agree with you when it comes to the description you gave earlier?	There may not be a consensus between Margaret and her peers as to the reasons for why social media exists in relation to their use. <u>It would require enough people to use it in a similar enough way to be able to keep those reasons for using it 'alive'.</u>	Unverifiable identity of strangers Easy to create an alias
663	Margaret: Some of them might; some of them might not. I don't really know.		
665			
666	Me: Other than bullying, which you've identified, what would be some of the other sort of dangers or pitfalls.	Fake profile – can unknown people online be trusted? Is this creating a generation of people who will be inclined to distrust people until they can verify who they are? <i>You wouldn't actually know – face-to-face, the only difference is better at guessing age, actual motives still unknowable.</i>	Unverifiable identity of strangers
670	Margaret: It's not, it doesn't take that long to make a fake profile. So you could say, like, you really be a 50 year old man that you're talking to whereas on their profile it say they're like 15 or something and you wouldn't actually know.		
672			
674			

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677	Me: Something about not knowing who the other person is, perhaps?	Stranger-danger.	Unverifiable identity of strangers
679	Margaret: Yeah.		
681	Me: Is that too general or is there something more specific about the point you were making?	<i>Not knowing the person 'properly'. How properly does it need to be- what is good enough?</i>	
683	Margaret: No, it's just not knowing the person you're actually talking to properly.		Potential distribution of sexually explicit content
684	Me: Okay and that's unless it's one of the friends that you were saying has added you.	It is ok if you know the person away from social media prior to them adding you on social media.	<del>Self-worth</del> Self-esteem
686	Margaret: Yeah.		<del>SM doesn't have</del> real life
687	Me: It may sound like a bit of an obvious question but, moving forward, what are other dangers that you think that are associated with that?	It is apparent that there is a sexualised element to the use of social media. It appears that though this may happen, Margaret & her peers do not necessarily share these experiences with each other. The denial of it happening appears to be mistrusted. <u>Is this element of social media use encouraging friends to lie to/deceive each other.</u> There is a need to be seen in a particular way with friends / peers whilst a need to be sexually mature to 'strangers' online. <u>Self-worth/Self-esteem.</u>	<del>consequences</del> Users not following guidelines
688			<del>Attention</del>
689	Margaret: [Pause] I think some, like, a few people my age have done it. They've sent pictures to people and they're not, like whatever, I think they might be explicit pictures. No-one has told me, but they could have done it. But they haven't done it, like, or said they did. Or, like, they said they done it. I don't know, coz like, maybe they're just saying that. I don't know.	This behaviour is sexually immature – the consequential impact of the virtual life doesn't seem to exist. If bullying online is seen to be ok (more acceptable than face-to-face), why wouldn't sexualised behaviour be?	<del>Desire-to-be-seen as</del> <del>mature</del>
690			Peer-pressure
692			Risky behaviour
694			Peer-pressure Social currency Fitting in Belonging Identity Hazing rituals



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695	Me: Okay, are people aware of the implications that these sorts of things have?		
698	Margaret: Some people are but I think, as well, where it's just, they want to do it or they feel like they have to do it in order to, like, fit in with their group of friends or make new friends.	<i>Is there a 'need' to do it to fit in with friends? Peer-pressure, conforming to group norms. Face-to-face this could be smoking or sex, online it is becoming sexually proactive to 'fit in' – social currency. Belonging/identity.</i>	Peer-pressure Belonging Social currency Identity Fitting in Social hierarchy
700			
701	Me: Can you say a bit more about that?		
702	Margaret: Like, I think a few people go on social media or use social media because their friends do it and because their friends keep mentioning it and tell them, "Ah well you should get it," otherwise you can't be in, like, a group or something. Then they might feel like, "Well, actually I have to be on there in order to fit in with them."	<i>Fitting in.</i> Peer pressure to engage with and use social media. A way of ensuring that a group exists even when they are not physically proximal. The individuals who then use / engage with Facebook feel the reason to do so it to fit in – the guidelines are ignored and the purpose becomes that of the group's expectations, the individual has less control of their own use. <u>Leaders</u> and <u>followers</u> / <u>power</u> .	Users not following guidelines Vulnerability Bullying Desire to access restricted tools
703			
705			
705			
708	Me: Thank you. If that happens, what implications come about as a result of that do you think?		
709			
711	Margaret: I think if more people want to like go on it that are at a younger age and more bullying happens through it as well.	Margaret's interpretation of peer-pressure is that bullying can occur, more especially to vulnerable users such as those 'younger' ones who seem to be engaging with it. <u>Why are these younger ones engaging with it?</u>	<del>Acceptance of</del> <del>materialistic nature</del> Misinterpretation of vulnerability Naivety Immaturity Identity Belonging <del>Attention</del>
712			
714	Me: And do you think the people who are doing it, who are feeling that peer pressure, do you think they're aware of that?		
715			
717	Margaret: Some might be; some might just	<i>There is a belief that this peer-pressure / necessity to engage with social media is perhaps a rite of passage.</i>	

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718	think, "Oh, well, maybe this is supposed to happen.... or maybe it's just a joke."	The 'bullying' could be misinterpreted as a joke by the victim, it is not bullying?	Bullying Social hierarchy Acceptance of ritualistic nature <del>Attention</del> Belonging Fitting-in
719	Me: Okay. And with their knowing and their understanding of what's happening, the implications if they weren't to have followed through and do the things that they're feeling pressured to do?		
722			
723	Margaret: I think that they'd probably still get bullied... because they haven't followed through it or they haven't said, "Oh well, I'll do it then."	The way to actually belong is through a hazing process - but even this does not mean you are guaranteed to be belong, there is an element of chance involved. What does this mean for the users? This is similar to gang culture – once you're in there are roles/expectations of what to do and how to behave. The group lives vicariously through its members – hence the ritualistic / habitual nature of use of social media. <u>Group identity is greater than individual identity.</u>	Keeping in touch Access to information Social currency Opportunity to explore the world
724	It's simple really, you do it and you fit in, or you don't do it and you don't. But then sometimes, you can do it and still not fit in. It's like chance I guess.		
726			
727			
729	Me: Thank you very much. Thinking about some of the more positive aspects of social media, do you think you can describe some of them?	<i>More opportunities to do stuff – through the inviting to events? Connectedness to family and friends. A better understanding of the world – in what sense? Even though you're not actually going out and doing anything.</i> Helps you to find out about celebrities, not really mentioned since the start of the interview, even though, celebrity information appeared to be a strong focus with regards to us of Twitter.	Interest based information seeking Comfortable to ask questions Mediation of communication
730			
731	Margaret: Well it helps you connect with your family and friends and it helps you, like, find out more about celebrities and also, like,		
732	[pause] it gives you, like, a better understanding of the world even though you're not actually going out and doing anything. It gives you more opportunities to do stuff.		
734			
736			
737	Me: Where you mentioned the not going out, can you say a bit more about that?	Twitter / Facebook make the learning element of things	

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738	Margaret: Like, say you wanna, I don't know, start up a clothing brand, you could look through on like Twitter or Facebook, clothing brands, and then ask how they, like, came about doing their clothing brand whereas if you were going out and you asked someone you might not feel comfortable enough to go out and actually say, "Oh, I just wanted to ask, how did you come about doing what you've done?"	efficient. Messages to people in the know could yield answers. <u>Will these be reliable?</u> Is Margaret expecting other people to do the work for her? Has social media made her lazy? Not feeling comfortable enough – Is this about Margaret's ability to talk to peer and communicate effectively away from social media.	Extensive use of SM means communicative needs can be met online
742			
745			
746	Me: Okay. What kind of things were leading to the not feeling comfortable element of that?		More confident when using SM
747	Margaret: Probably because I spent so long on the social media they've gotten into the habit of thinking, Well, actually, if I'd gone out and done that they probably would've just said that I could've used their Twitter or something.	The use of Twitter means people are not engaging with other means of communication as often – thus losing those skills and relying on Twitter as there is an expectation that is it more efficient / easier.	
749			
751			SM use saves time It's easier to communicate with people through SM
753	Me: Okay. Something in that about confidence, do you think?		
754	Margaret: Yeah.	Feeling more confident when communicating through Twitter.	
756	Me: where you used the phrase probably could've just done it on Twitter or Facebook.		SM use saves time SM use can be efficient
757	What's that about?		
759	Margaret: Saves time I guess. It's a lot easier to, like, message someone than it would be to go out and actually ask someone for help.	<u>Saves time. Easier. Actually ask someone for help?</u> <u>Does asking through Twitter not count?</u> Would they know where to go, who/how to contact?	
761			

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762	Me: What do you mean by the word "easier"	Easier = less time consuming. Five minutes to send a message – response time? Understanding / completeness of the response.	Face-to-face communication is likely to give you more information
763	there?		
765	Margaret: It's just more time, like, it takes more time to go out and ask someone or go and find someone that could help you. Whereas, it takes like five minutes to send them a message.		
767			
768	Me: Okay. And do you think one way of doing it is more effective than another way?	Face-to-face would yield more information – but in the trade off, it seems a less time consuming approach is more valuable than a more comprehensive response. <u>Start of information search?</u>	Profile kept on private Personal information kept personal
768			
770	Margaret: I think it, you'd probably get more information if you went and spoke to someone than what you would if they, you sent them a message.		
771			
772	Me: Okay. Alright, so imagine, if you will, you're at home you're on your Kindle. You're on Twitter, you've got Tumblr open, Twitter open... You're flicking through and you've seen a couple of things going on. Facebook's on as well and someone's tried to contact you. It's like you were saying earlier about you don't know who this person is...	Profile = private, no personal information. Margaret is a trusted place. Potential friends / peers / acquaintances would need to prove their worth before they earned the right to be Margaret's friend online. <u>Social</u>	
773			
773			
775			
777		Profile = private, no personal information. Margaret is a trusted place. Potential friends / peers / acquaintances would need to prove their worth before they earned the right to be Margaret's friend online. <u>Social</u>	
780	Margaret: Yeah.		
781	Me: Before you decided to not add them, what things would you make sure that you've done?		
783	Margaret: Make sure my profile's, like, on		

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784	private. Or, like, even if they can add me make sure none of my personal information's out there.	<u>value/currency of being Margaret's friend. Self-worth.</u>	Friends creating alias profiles because of bullying People use SM even though they may be bullied Protective mechanisms Open profiles can be found by anyone Verification of people being who they say they are
785	Me: Alright, where you were talking about some of the things around identity...where you don't know who the other person is. Do you think there's also, not necessarily people who are doing it in a malicious or dangerous way, but people who are making a different identity online because of another reason?	Margaret's friends have been harassed / bullied. Creating alias/fake profiles has a protective mechanism. Margaret was aware of this so knew to expect the fake profiles. <u>Why have they chosen to go online in a disguised way rather than confronting the bullies?</u> How many people know who the 'fake profile' is? How long before people realise and know who the profile actually belongs to.	
786			
787			
788			
789			
790	Margaret: Yeah, I think, like, a few of my friends have had problems with people on, like, Facebook where they've been, like, harassed or people have sent them, like, loads of messages bullying them. So a few of my friends have made, like, different profiles. But that said, they've told me like, in person, "It's me, I've had to do this because of a certain issue going on" whereas like if you got, say your profile wasn't marked private and they've gone through your friend's list, they could've just say, "Oh well, I'm your friend. I've just had to make this profile". Whereas if you get told, like, face to face you, like, know properly that's what's actually happened.	People whose profiles are not kept private – can be found by random people searching through lists then claiming to be friends. <u>Does Margaret feel safe online? Do her friends? Self-protection.</u>	
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800	Me: Okay. So there's something in that about protecting yourself? And there's something in there around people using other people as an alias.		More confident on SM
802			

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803	Margaret: Yeah.		
805	Me: Do you think that Margaret that uses social media is different to the Margaret that meets	<u>Margaret is more confident online.</u>	More likely to interact with celebrities through SM SM gives opportunities to communicate with people you may not meet
806	people face to face?		
808	Margaret: Well, I think I'm a lot more confident on social media than what I am, like, face to		
810	face.		
811	Me: What does confident look like?	Margaret feels more confident to be able to communicate with celebrities online. Anonymous? More control of the discussion / process thoughts before interaction. Fear of no response? Although she acknowledges that she may not necessarily encounter a celebrity in her day-to-day life.	
812	Margaret: Like, say I wanted to find out, I don't		
813	know, like, how a celebrity is doing or something or ask a celebrity a question I		
815	wouldn't, say I met them in, not like I would meet them in the street, but say I met them in		
817	the street. I don't think I'd ask them. I'd probably just walk...carry on walking.	Confidence.	
819	Me: So, is that where your confidence would come in?		
820	Margaret: Yeah.		
821	Me: Okay. And let's imagine you did meet a celebrity in the street and there was no one else		
823	about. It was just you and that celebrity. You were saying you wouldn't just stop to talk to	Although, Margaret may engage with the celebrity if no-one else was around. On Twitter, other people can see her tweet, what is the difference? It's not actually her saying anything to her, it's her sending a message,	
825	them.		

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827	Margaret: Like, if it was just, like, me and that person, I might stop and speak to them.	hoping to get a reply. Like everyone else on Twitter.	
829	Me: Okay. But if there were other people around?	Wouldn't if there were other people around.	More comfortable with sending a message to a celebrity through SM
831	Margaret: I don't think I would.		
833	Me: Okay. And that is mostly to do with confidence?	Based on confidence.	
835	Margaret: Yeah.		
836	Me: Is there anything else in that?		
837	Margaret: [Pause] I don't know. Probably because it's a lot easier to send them a message or to tweet them. Whereas you don't feel comfortable enough or confident enough to actually go and speak to them face to face.	<u>Easier to send message. Comfortable, relating to feelings of anxiety? Nervousness?</u> Do the tweets need to be reciprocated? Do they need to be invited? Face-to-face, Twitter removes that element of conversation. Makes it easier to 'talk' to a celebrity.	
839			
840			
842	Me: Okay, so the Margaret on social media is more confident than the Margaret that meets people face to face.	More confident.	SM world and face-to-face world are different
844			Less chance of doing things meeting through SM
846	Margaret: Yeah.		
848	Me: Are there any other differences or similarities?	The only difference that Twitter makes it to add confidence.	
849	Margaret: Not that I can think of, no.		

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851	Me: Okay. Do you think that the social media world and the meeting-people-face-to-face world are the same thing?	People met face-to-face are more likely to be engaged with away from social media. Does this mean Margaret is not likely to meet people face-to-face who she has met online. Does social media not facilitate/encourage meeting face-to-face?	
853	Margaret: No, not really. You probably have a better chance of doing things if you met people face to face or if you did things with people face to face. Whereas what you would do on, like, social media...		
858	Me: Okay. Do you think things that happen on social media impact on things that happen in the space where you meet people face to face?	Doesn't know about impact of social media on face-to-face.	SM communication with peers helped by face-to-face friends
860			
862	Margaret: Oh, I don't know.		
863	Me: Okay. And what about the other way around?	Meeting someone face-to-face first facilitates communication / interaction on social media ( <u>trust / common interests?</u> ). Meeting online first, makes face-to-face discussions difficult, 'wouldn't know what to say'. <u>What is the basis of this type of friendship?</u>	
864	Margaret: I think if you've met someone face to face, say, like, at a party or something, you'd probably talk to them more on like Facebook or Twitter or something whereas if you met them again you probably wouldn't know what to say.		
866			
867			
869	Me: Okay. you would still talk to them on Facebook but you might not necessarily speak to them if you met them face to face?		Face-to-face become friends on SM this friendship is predominantly sustained through SM
871			
873	Margaret: Yeah.		
874	Me: Why do you think that is?	Meeting face-to-face, the adding on social media, the friendship grows on social media – but if she tries to	



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875	Margaret: I don't really know, like, I've done it a few times. Like, when I've gone to a friend's birthday party and they've introduced me to someone and I've got to know them at the party, so they add me on Facebook. I talk to them more on there than whereas if I met them, like, again I probably wouldn't talk to them as much.	bring this back to face-to-face, Margaret doesn't not feel she would be able to sustain a conversation with this person. Are social media sites a more <u>comfortable</u> place to speak with people?	
876			
878			
880			
881	Me: Okay. What would you talk to them about on Facebook?		
882	Margaret: I'd just ask how they are. I mean, like, get to know them a bit more and if you know them then ask them anything that's going and, like, say they've put, like, a status of, like, how angry they are. You'd ask them why they're angry whereas, if I, if you'd met them face to face you probably wouldn't like ask them or if you did you probably wouldn't get the answers that you were expecting to get. They'd probably just, like, shout at you 'cause it's easier for them to shout at you face to face than what it is on social media.	Margaret could possibly have difficulties interpreting people's emotional positions given that she is looking for cues to a person's emotional state through Facebook statuses. <u>Once again the idea of being the victim of an aggressor comes up as a predominant focus / example of Margaret's time on social media. There appears to be something about having expectations of other people's responses because of knowing explicit emotional states prior to communicating with others.</u> It's easier to get shouted at face-to-face than on social media, physically yes, but as with bullying, does it count less if it happens on social media?	SM used to get to know people better SM allows an explicit disclosure of emotional states SM makes interaction more predictable
883			
884			
885			
888			
890	Me: Is one area safer than the other one?	<u>However, speaking to people face-to-face is safer than talking to them on social media.</u>	Speaking face-to-face is safer than SM
893			
895	Margaret: I think probably speaking to people face to face is a lot safer than using social media.	<u>Escape and witnesses with face-to-face conversations.</u> Online it could be a 50-year old man, but there would be little/no evidence that aggression may have taken	Inappropriate discussions on SM do not have
896			
897	Me: Okay. How?		

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898	Margaret: Like, you'd have more of an escape if	place. Facebook is too private a place to have a	witnesses
898	you spoke to people face to face. And, as well,	conversation with a stranger. However, Margaret feels	SM discussions have
901	like, you wouldn't have more proof, but, say	it would be safer to speak with a stranger face-to-face.	less of an escape
902	like a fifty-year-old man or someone was	<u>The idea of escape would arguable be easier online as</u>	than face-to-face
903	speaking to you and if there was people around	<u>you could 'block' or close a chat window. However, if</u>	discussions
	you you'd get evidence on those people as well.	<u>Facebook is so integral to your routine, it may be</u>	
	Whereas, say it was, like, on Facebook or	<u>difficult to come away from there.</u>	
	something you'd only have the evidence of		
	yourself and that person.		
904	Me: Okay, that's about your own personal		
	safety where you're communicating on social		
	media. And thinking about what you were		
906	saying where if someone was in a bad mood		SM discussion less
907	and shouting, if you think about safety in terms	Face-to-face communication is 'real'. Saying	safe than face-to-
	of having a conversation with someone and not	something horrible or mean face-to-face would have	face
908	being shouted at, do you think one is more safer	repercussions. People could/would get in to trouble for	
	than the other?	it. On Facebook, things could get deleted, nullifying its	
910	Margaret: I think probably speaking to people	existence. <i>Not think anything of it would imply that</i>	
	face to face is a lot more safer because, like, say	<i>such a thing would not likely have a profound</i>	
912	you were really annoyed with them but you	<i>emotional impact.</i> Communication on Facebook	Messages exchanged
913	didn't want to tell them and they suddenly say	doesn't appear to have an emotional impact. They're	through SM could be
	something that was really horrible...	words on a screen, not heard or felt. They can be	deleted without
914	Me: Yeah.	deleted and doctored. Whereas, words exchanged in a	thought
916	Margaret: ...Like, saying it face to face you	face-to-face interaction are multi-sensory, exist, they	
	know you'd get into trouble for it or you'd know	happened. Or, arguments / bully on social media has no	
918	that they'd say something back whereas on, like,	witnesses and therefore is more difficult to prove.	
	Facebook or something you could delete a		SM actions cannot

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919	message or they could delete a message and not think anything of it.		be undone face-to-face accidents can be apologised for
921	Me: Okay. So do you think you can undo things on social media?	It is possible to say sorry face-to-face, social media cannot be undone. Contrary to her previous point.	
923	Margaret: No, not really, like, whereas if you say something by accident face to face you can say sorry.	<i>'That is out there' – pandora's box appears to have been opened.</i> Apologising doesn't seem to be an option. If sorry is meant to be an emotional response, a show of remorse, it doesn't exist if it were only to be done over social media.	SM communication by accident cannot be apologised for SM communication is out there
926	Me: Okay.		
927	Margaret: Or if you say something by accident on, like, social media you couldn't really apologise that is out there.		
929			
930	Me: Okay. Is that always out there or are there ways that social media would be able to cover it up?	There appears to be an audit trail but Margaret does not necessarily feel that this would have been sufficient in proving conversations previously. Here, she suggests that the social media company would need to remove content, by good-enough request.	It may be possible to have SM messages removed
930			
932	Margaret: Like, they could probably, like, if you, like, email, like, the social media or something you could probably get them to delete it but...whether they would or not...		
933			
934	Me: Okay. Alright. It's really interesting when you've come up with some really interesting ideas in that chat we've been having. You've highlighted some things that maybe were a bit of a concern to you and some bits that you sort of seem to enjoy using Facebook, or social media. If I was to say to you, do you think that		Parents should check-in to ensure
935			
936			
937			

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939	there are friends your family or your teachers at	<u>Parental regulation.</u> Parent's responsibility to keep children safe online. Checking in with the young person to ensure that they're safe, and that everything's ok.	safety through SM use
940	school could do using Facebook that might make it more of an enjoyable place for you?		
942	Margaret: I think, like, family, not necessarily teachers but, like, your parents or someone		
944	who, not, like, keep a close eye but every once in a while check that everything's okay.		
945	Me: How would they do that?		
946	Margaret: I think there should be a, like, a parent control or something on there. Like, I'm	Margaret is in favour of parental controls on social media sites, or parents monitoring social media behaviour. Margaret would also like to see that social media appears to take misdemeanours more seriously by restricting access to the use of the social media.	Parents should have control and access to SM profiles Parents should have permission to restrict access for negative behaviour
947	not sure where you're allowed to use it and you'd have to ask, like, your parents or		
949	something to go on there or it would just, like, log you out and not let you log back in...If		
951	you're sending something horrible.		
952	Me: And who would decide how old you needed to be?	There is not enough of an understanding of the rules / use of social media. As such, there are underage users, who could be getting themselves in to trouble.	SM use from prior to minimum age requirement
954	Margaret: Well, there is apparently an age limit of, like, thirteen on there and a lot of people sort		
956	of, like, my friends were like, I know, aren't actually the right age.		
958	Me: So that's things your parents can do.	Parental role.	School should raise awareness about Internet safety
960	Margaret: Yeah.		
961	Me: What about things that people at school can	Teachers could raise awareness of the risks associated	School should make impact of Internet

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964	do?	with social media / Internet use. <i>Not that anyone would really – implies that Margaret feels that the schools / teachers do not care enough / have other priorities.</i>	use known
966	Margaret: Like, they could probably, like, not that anyone would really. They could probably do, like, an assembly or something on, like, Internet safety and, like, the actual effects.		SM is not always doing enough in cases of bullying
967	Me: Okay. Do you think enough is being done?	There does not appear to be enough of a consequence for bullying on Facebook.	
968	Margaret: In some cases, yeah, in some cases, no. Like, I think there should be more of, like,		SM areas for development focus on safety and security
970	something more should happen on, like, Facebook if you get reported, like, bullying or something like that.		
971			
973	Me: Okay. Are there things that you would like to see happen other than the safety and security aspect?	Margaret's areas for development of social media are around safety and security.	
975			
976	Margaret: No, not really.		
977	Me: Okay. Like I said, that was really, really interesting. It was really, really insightful. It has really helped me understand why some young people use social media and what types of social media, and how. Can you think of a time when someone should definitely use social media?	<u>Social media is about choice</u> – contrary to Margaret's description of the peer pressure younger users feel to engage with behaviours that could be inappropriate / get themselves in to trouble.	SM use is a choice SM is not for everyone
980			
981			
983	Margaret: No, not really. Like, I don't think it's something everyone has to use it or you definitely have to use like, it's your choice		If users are being bullied they should
984			

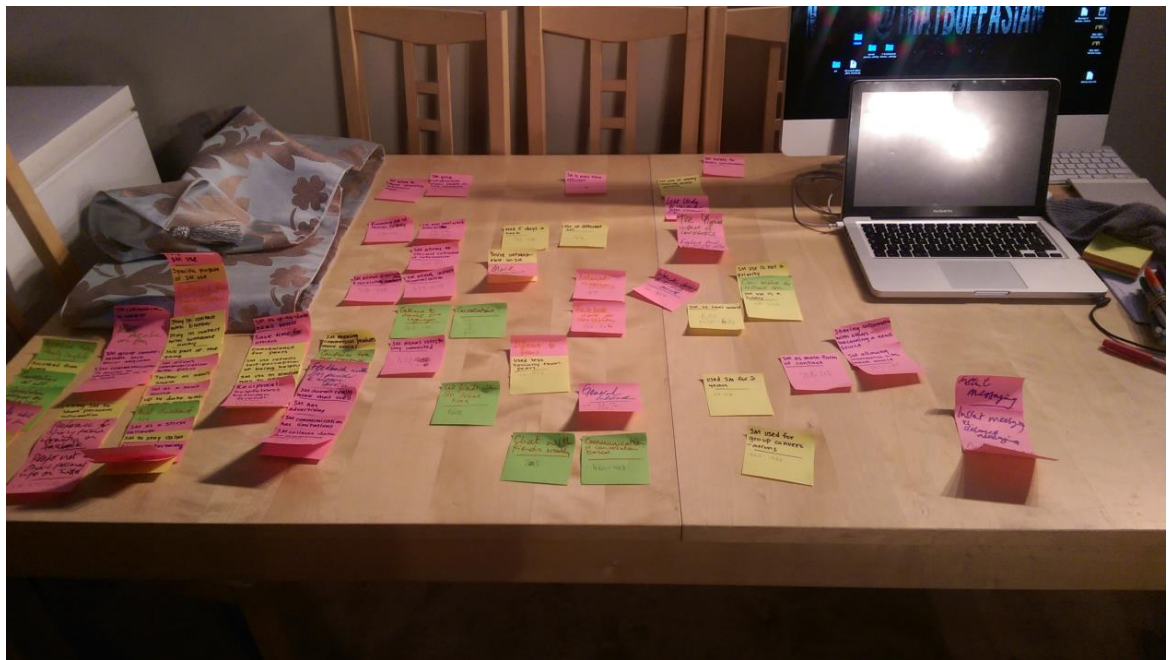
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986	whether you use it or not.	<u>Once again choice and control become necessary for the younger users. They should take the initiative to remove themselves from the difficult situation.</u>	prepare to stop using SM Preventative mechanism Safety
987	Me: Okay. And so then the same question the other way: Is there a time when someone definitely shouldn't use it?		
990	Margaret: Like, I think, like, if you know you're being bullied I think it would probably be best if you, like, just step away and was like, Oh I won't use that for a bit, and see whether it calms down.		
991			
993			
995	Me: Okay. is there anything else that you wanted to share about social media or do you think you found it quite interesting so you'd like to share it?	No further comments.	
997			
999	Margaret: No, not really.		
1001	Me: Okay, or is there anything that you're expecting me to ask that I haven't asked?	Interview was as expected.	
1003	Margaret: No, not really.		
1005	Me: Is there something that I have asked that you weren't expecting me to ask?	No unexpected questions.	
1007	Margaret: No.		
1009	Me: Okay. So are you happy with everything that we've discussed?	Happy with everything discussed.	

**Appendix R – The Analytic Process for Participant 2; Margaret Thompson**

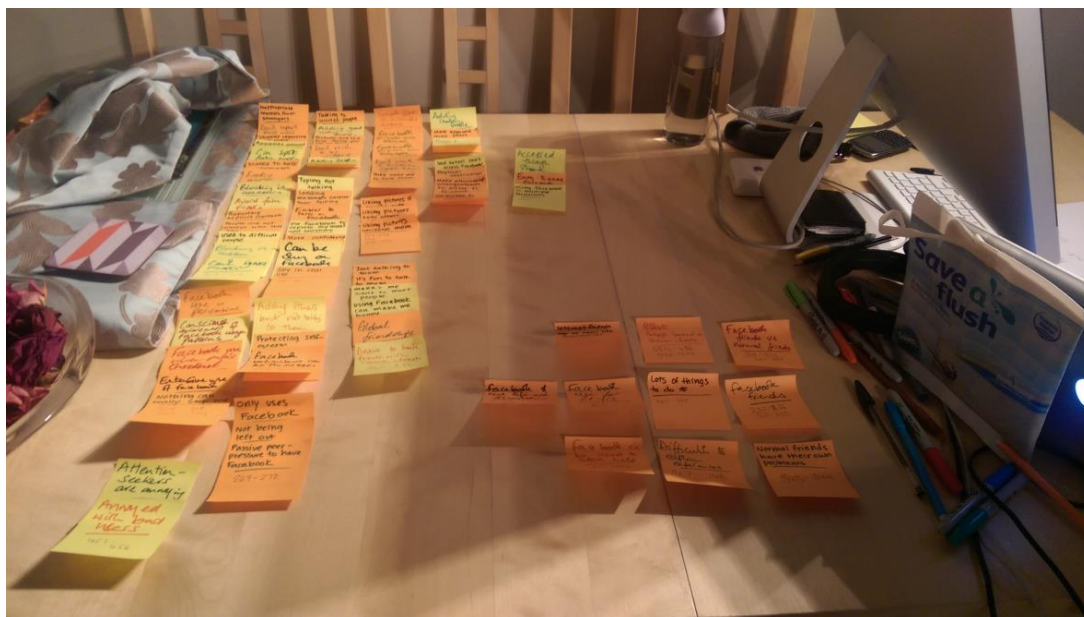
1011	Margaret: Yeah.	No questions for me.	
1012	Me: Okay. And do you have any questions for me?		
1015	Margaret: No, not really.		
1017	Me: Okay. Once again thank you so much. It's been really helpful having, your input and your understanding of social media. I'm gonna bring the interview to a close now if that's okay.	End of interview.	
1018			
1020	Margaret: Yeah.		

## Appendix S – Photos of the Analytic Process in Action





## Appendix S – Photos of the Analytic Process in Action



**Appendix T – The Gibbs Reflective Cycle**

Gibbs (1988) Reflective Cycle

